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THE

HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, AND DIPLOMATIC
WRITINGS

OF

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN

BY

CHRISTIAN E. DETMOLD

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

541211
20.5.52

BOSTON
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY
1882

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UNIVERSITY PRESS:
JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE.

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MISSIONS.

(CONTINUED.)

MISSIONS TO VARIOUS PARTS OF THE FLORENTINE DOMINION.*

I.

FROM THE MAGISTRACY OF THE TEN TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, SECRETARY, IN MUGELLO.

3 JANUARY, 1506.

WE have received your letters of yesterday, which you sent by express, and have paid the messenger for his trouble. We are well satisfied with what you have done up to the present, and commend you for the same. We exhort you to continue your efforts to the end with the same zeal which you have displayed thus far, so that we may be able to commend you again.

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* At the recommendation of Machiavelli, the Signoria of Florence resolved to enroll its own subjects, so as to have an armed force of their own when occasion should arise. The recommendation of the Secretary was begun to be put into practical operation by enrolling throughout the dominion all men capable of bearing arms, and Machiavelli himself was commissioned to carry into effect the greater part of this enrolment. His mission lasted from December, 1505, till April, 1506. According to his different tours he was furnished by the Magistracy of the Ten with letters of credence to the respective Rectors or governors of the places where he went. These credentials were as follows:—

TO THE VICE-GOVERNOR OF THE MUGELLO, MARIOTTO DI PIERO RUCELLAI.
13 JANUARY, 1506.

You know the object of our having lately sent our Secretary, Niccolo Machiavelli, to Borgo a San Lorenzo, and the reason of his present return to Borgo to complete his business. Should he need any assistance, you will furnish him two of your cavaliers, ordering them to report themselves to the said Machiavelli at Borgo on Thursday morning next, so as to be with him before sunrise. The said Machiavelli will be found either at the Castello of Borgo, or at the house of Antonio del Rabatta, near by. Fail not to have our orders carried into execution.

TO THE PODESTA OF DICOMANI AND OF PONTE-A-SIEVE, AT SIEVE.
28 JANUARY, 1506.

The bearer of this is our Secretary, Niccolo Machiavelli, whom we send to Sieve to attend to certain business with which we have charged him. We desire

II.

MAGNIFICENT AND ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNORI, ETC.: —

So that your Lordships may know how I am progressing with the business of enrolling, and may not be surprised at not having received any news from me, I beg now to inform you that I arrived at Ponte-a-Sieve a week ago yesterday evening. But as this Podesteria is large and disorganized, and ill supplied with messengers, I could not complete the enrolment of the men here until Sunday. On Monday following I moved to Dicomano, where, by way of saving time, I had ordered the men of that Podesteria to meet me; this measure, however, did not succeed, for I found only those of the commune of Dicomano, whilst none from the commune of San Gaudenzio had come. On Tuesday, therefore, I went over to San Gaudenzio, where, thanks to God, a great part of the men of that commune made their appearance; so that in these two communes, that is to say in the entire Podesteria of Dicomano, I have enrolled two hundred men, which I count, however, upon having to reduce to one hundred and fifty. Two causes have contributed to give me the greatest trouble in this matter; the one is the inveterate habit of disobedience of these people, and the other is the enmity existing between the population of Petrognano and of Campana, who occupy the two sides of the moun-

you will comply with all his requests, and render him all assistance and favor as though we asked it for ourselves personally.

It would seem that the last region to which Machiavelli went for the above purpose was the Casentino, as is seen from the following documents: —

26 FEBRUARY, 1506.

We Ten, etc. make known to all who may see these presents, the bearer of which is the citizen Niccolo Machiavelli, our Secretary, that we have sent him into the valley of Casentino and its dependencies to enroll and arm under the banners of our militia all such men as may to him seem fit. And therefore we command all our Rectors and officials to render him all favor and assistance, and all our subjects to show him all obedience, if they value our good will, and fear our displeasure.

TO LORENZO CECCHI DE' CAPPONI, VICAR OF CASENTINO.
26 FEBRUARY, 1506.

We send our Secretary, Niccolo Machiavelli, to your place for the purpose of enrolling the male inhabitants, as he will more fully make known to you. And we therefore charge you to render him all aid and support, and order our subjects to show him all obedience.

tain. Of these latter I have enrolled such as I deemed suitable; but of the men of Petrognano and Castagneto, who make common cause against those of Campana, none were willing to be enrolled, although some forty of them appeared before me, with the son of Andreaso, who is their leader; and after much consultation amongst themselves this son of Andreaso told me that they had resolved not to go anywhere where their chiefs could not also go; if, however, it could be arranged that their chiefs should be secure, every one of them would gladly come. These several chiefs and this son of Andreaso are under a ban, and they seemed to think that a good way of getting this ban revoked would be to make themselves greatly desired. I replied to them, that I believed it was in no way your Lordships' wish to force any one into their military service, but that it was a thing rather to be asked for as a favor, seeing the advantages that would accrue to those who were enrolled. They went away without coming to any other conclusion, and I am rather glad of it than otherwise; for thus this company will be, so to say, all of one color, whilst it would have been divided if these men here had been enrolled.

I returned here yesterday and expect to arrange matters so as to have the first review of the enrolled of this Podesteria on Sunday next; but although I have enrolled all together three hundred and thirty men in this Podesteria, yet I count upon having to reduce this number to two hundred, or even less. After completing matters here next Sunday, I shall go to Dicomano, and hope to finish there in three or four days, after which I shall return to Florence. It is impossible to give arms to the men of these two Podesterias at the same time, owing to their being a considerable distance apart. I have not been able to complete this business with greater despatch; and if any one thinks differently, let him try, and he will find out what it is to bring together a lot of peasants, and of this sort.

I recommend myself to your Lordships. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PONTE-A-SIEVE, 5 February, 1506. *Secretary.*

III.

TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

By your letter of yesterday we learn what you have done in regard to the enrolment of those two Podesterias; and we are much pleased with the diligence displayed by you in that matter. We are sure that you have lost no time, and that the labor of getting all those men together is more difficult than what it seemed at first; but he who does well acts quickly, and it is thus that we suppose you have acted in this business, respecting which we have nothing more to say except that you continue in the same way. *Bene vale!*

Ex Palatio Florentino, die 6 Februarii 1506.

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IV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

I arrived here in Poppi on Saturday evening, and on Sunday I enrolled the men of this Podesteria, yesterday those of Pratovecchio, and to-day those of Castel San Niccolo; and to-morrow I shall make the enrolment of Bibbiena, which will complete the Vicariate. I shall unite San Niccolo and Poppi under one constable, and Bibbiena and Pratovecchio under another. These four Podesterias will furnish about seven hundred choice men. Unless the constables come and the arms are sent me, I shall not be able to do anything more. I write to Francesco Quaratesi for such arms as I desire, and beg your Lordships to urge the departure of the constables; and during the delay of their arrival and the receipt of the arms I shall enroll the Podesteria of Chiusi and that of Focognano, which may be equipped and drilled under the same constable. Your Lordships must decide whether you will arm these two Podesterias, and in case you do, then you must inform me and find another constable; and it might be well, if your Lordships approve of it, to appoint either Dietajuti of Prato or Martinuzzo Corso.

I beg your Lordships will favor me with a reply, and instruct Francesco to send me the arms I have asked for.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secretary.

POPPI, 3 March, 1506.

V.

TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

5 MARCH, 1506.

SPECTABILIS VIR CARISSIME NOSTER : —

Yours of the 3d of March reached us only yesterday evening, and to-day we have attended to nothing else but to send off lances, which will arrive to-morrow evening at the place directed by you; and yesterday morning before the breakfast hour Malgante and the priest of Citerna left here, and should have arrived to-day.

We approve of your plan and encourage your efforts to enroll the men of the two Podesterias of Chiusi and Castel Focognano. Some action will be taken to-morrow respecting the two constables you ask for; and we shall send them promptly, although we do not know whether they are here.

We have also sent to-day arms and banners to Giovanni Folchi; but have not succeeded in finding Piero d' Anghiari, although he has been sought for at Cascina and at home, as well as in several other places; for this reason Filippo da Casavecchia is still here, as he did not wish to leave without the certainty that the constable would follow immediately after him. Everything is being urged forward with all possible diligence.

VI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 3d instant, informing you that, in addition to the four Podesterias of this Vicariate, I would to-day enroll the men of Castel Focognano, and to-morrow those of Chiusi; and that I should await your answer whether you wished to arm these two Podesterias; in which case, I asked that you would send me one more constable besides the two already designated. I have since then come over to Castel Focognano, but have changed my plans, for I find that this Podesteria is divided into two districts, namely, Castel Focognano and Subbiano, each of which is sufficiently large to furnish one hundred and fifty men. I therefore contemplate uniting Castel Focognano with Poppi and Castel San Niccolo; and Subbiano with Bibbiena and Pratovecchio. Thus two constables will suffice me, and therefore you need not send any more. But I should be glad if your Lordships would urge Quaratesi to send me the arms which I have asked of him, for I can do nothing more here unless these arms come, and I waste my time. For the present, I shall leave Chiusi aside; it might hereafter be united with other places of the Vicariate of Anghiari, or I may leave it by itself, for it is one of the largest Podesterias; but we must wait until the snows are over before attempting to do anything with it.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Poppi, 5 March, 1506. *Secretary.*

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VII.

TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, AT POPPI.

7 March, 1506.

Your letter of the 5th was received yesterday evening; and as we rely wholly upon you in the business you have in hand down there, and upon whatever you may judge for the best in relation to it, therefore we approve whatever you may decide in the matter; and in compliance with your suggestion we shall not for the present send any other constable.

We have never been able to find either Piero d' Anghiari or Martinello Corso; but as it seems to us that any further search for them would delay the organization of the levies of Firenzuola too long, we have this morning transferred this charge to Giovanni del Mare, who will at latest leave for that place together with Filippo da Casavecchia.

On arrival of this you will have received the arms you have asked for, as the Proveditore tells us that he has sent them all to the place ordered by you, namely, Castel San Niccolo.

SECOND MISSION TO THE COURT OF ROME.

INSTRUCTIONS

GIVEN TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, SENT TO ROME.

25 August, 1506.*

Niccolo, — You will proceed by post to Rome, there to see his Holiness the Pope, or wherever else you may learn that he is to be found, and reply to the demands which the Protonotary Merino has addressed to us in his behalf, respecting the enterprise against Bologna, and the desire of his Holiness that we should yield to him the services of Marc Antonio Colonna, our Condottiere. Our determination in this matter and the sense in which you are to reply to him are as follows. In the first instance, if time and place permit, you will praise the good and holy resolve of his Holiness, by showing how agreeable it is to us, and how much good we anticipate from it. And then, if you think proper, you will excuse with such reasons as are known to you the few days' delay that has occurred in making this reply. And lastly, as to the request of his Holiness for our Condottiere and his company, you will say that such a request was so new and unexpected that it kept us for some time in suspense, because we have since last March dismissed our other Condottieri with about two hundred men-at-arms; having kept only what was necessary for our own wants; and having to keep the field for two months longer, we do not see how we can with safety deprive ourselves of any more troops. We say this, because, if we had known the wishes of his Holiness sooner, we should either not have dismissed those we did, or we should have engaged others in their place, so as to have been able to comply with the request of his Holiness, although it would have been very onerous for us, and we should with difficulty have borne the expense.

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* The peace concluded at Blois between the kings of France and Spain relieved Pope Julius II. of the fear of having to cope with a powerful enemy when he should take up arms for the purpose, as he called it, of purging the states of the Church of the tyrants, and bringing them back to their obedience to him, so that he thought the opportune moment had come for carrying his design into effect. Assured of the French alliance, at ease with regard to the Venetians, whom he allowed, so long as he deemed it convenient, to hold Faenza and Rimini; having already recovered Imola, Cesena, and Furli from them, he resolved to begin the war by attacking the most feeble; namely, Gianpaolo Baglioni and Giovanni Bentivogli, with the intention of driving the one out of Perugia and the other out of Bologna. To make his success the more sure, he asked for help from the king of France, from the Duke of Ferrara, from Pandolfo Petrucci, from the Venetians, and from the Florentines. To the latter he sent his Protonotario Merino with the request to send him one hundred men-at-arms under command of Marc Antonio Colonna, who was at the time in the service of the Florentine republic. At the Council held for the purpose of deciding upon the reply to be made to the Pope's request, all present were not of the same mind; but the opinion of Piero Soderini prevailed, supported as it was by Giovanbattista Ridolfi and Piero de Guicciardini, namely, that they should consent to furnish the desired help, delaying it however as long as possible. Niccolo Machiavelli was charged to carry this reply to the Pope, and to accompany him in his expedition until he should be replaced by an ambassador. Having left Florence on the 25th of August, Machiavelli found Julius II. already on the way at Nepi; and from there he followed him until the 1st of November, when he returned to Florence by way of Imola, having yielded his place to the new Ambassador, Messer Francesco Pepi. The following letters contain the history of Machiavelli's mission, and of the events that occurred during that period.

We do not mean to say by this, however, that we intend to withhold our assistance, or decline to lend our hand to so holy an enterprise; but are resolved to do most willingly all that is in our power to please his Holiness; not only to be personally agreeable to him, but also because of the great good which we hope will flow from this beginning. And being firmly resolved to concede to his Holiness the troops he asks for, we pray his Holiness that, until the actual execution of his enterprise, and until all other things are provided according to the statement submitted to us by the said Protonotary, he will allow us to make use ourselves of these troops; especially as the Signor Marc Antonio is at this moment the general-in-chief of our troops, and if he should leave the confines of Pisa that country and the troops that remain there would find themselves without a competent commander, and with an insufficient guard. But whilst the other supplies are being prepared, the winter season will be approaching, and we shall also have been able to provide some additional troops for that guard. And in fact you can explain to and assure his Holiness that, when once his enterprise is fairly under way, and his troops and those of his allies begin to assemble and to march, and have received all the other support which the Protonotary has told us of, he may depend upon it that our troops will not be the last, and more especially so as they are in the neighborhood. You will add, that we have sent you to be near his Holiness throughout this whole expedition, and until we can replace you by our Ambassador, which will be soon; so that his Holiness may have some one whom he can direct to advise us at what time and where he may wish us to send our troops, or of anything else that may occur. And whilst following the court you will keep us constantly and carefully informed of everything that takes place, and that may seem to you to be noteworthy.

J. MARCELLUS, ETC., ETC.

LETTER I.

MAGNIFICENT AND ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNORI: —

I arrived yesterday at Nepi, and the Pope with the court came the same day; as his Holiness had left Rome the day before, he declined to attend to any business yesterday evening, and thus I did not see him. But this morning I presented myself before him immediately after his breakfast; and before rising from table he gave me an audience in presence of their Eminences of Volterra and Pavia,[*] and of Messer Gabriello, who has lately come from Florence; and so that your Lordships may know at the same time what I said and the replies made to me, I shall report both, word for word, as follows: —

"Most Holy Father, your Holiness knows how devoted my "illustrious Signoria have ever been to the Holy See, and how "they have always fearlessly and unhesitatingly exposed them- "selves to every danger for the purpose of sustaining and "increasing its dignity. This ancient devotion is increased "twofold with regard to the person of your Holiness, because, "even before attaining your present elevated position, they "found in you a father and protector of our republic. It is

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[*] This was Messer Francesco da Castel del Rio, Bishop of Pavia, and Cardinal, etc.

"proper, therefore, that they should desire the increase of the "dignity and power of your Holiness; for such increase will "also strengthen their hope of obtaining from your Holiness "whatever they need for the welfare of their country. Nor "could they give higher praise or show greater satisfaction "with the enterprise, of which your Holiness has caused them "to be informed by your envoy, than to pronounce it good and "holy, and truly worthy of the sanctity and goodness of your "Holiness. It is true that many circumstances and considera-"tions of importance, both general and particular, kept them "for a time in suspense and made them tardy in their decis-"ion, for they had learned that King Ferdinand was going to "Naples, which, considering that some would not be satisfied "with this, might give rise to some disturbances. They under-"stand that the Emperor is with his army on the confines of "Venetia, the government of which has sent its troops into the "Friuli, and has appointed two Proveditori, and given them "great power and authority." (I said this because I had heard yesterday from a person worthy of all confidence that this news was true.) "Now this invasion of the Emperor," continued I, "if he advances any further, is of the greatest "importance, for it may cause great trouble in Italy, and there-"fore deserves to be taken into serious consideration. As to "their own affairs, my Signoria have the war with Pisa on "hand, which is as onerous as ever, if not even more so; for the "Pisans show constantly an increased audacity. My Signoria "have moreover dismissed this year some two hundred men-at-"arms, and have kept barely enough for their defence, with no "other commander for their troops but Marc Antonio, and to "deprive themselves of his services might cause them serious "harm. They hear that the Venetians are greatly dissatisfied "with this enterprise, and that their Ambassador at Rome has "given proof of it. Another point which my Signoria have "noticed, and which your Holiness must pardon me for men-"tioning, is that it seems to them that the affairs of the Church "are not managed in conformity with those of other princes, "for they see the towns of the Church left by one door and re-"entered by another; as has just been done by the Morattini "in Furli, whence they have expelled those who were placed "there by your Holiness. Moreover, we see no indications of "any movement on the part of France, which destroys all faith "in what your Holiness has publicly promised himself from "there. Nevertheless, and notwithstanding these considera-"tions, the importance of which is fully appreciated by your "Holiness, my Signoria is resolved not to deviate from, nor "fail in, its purpose of giving their aid to this holy enterprise, "and are resolved to do whatever may be agreeable to your "Holiness, whenever they see that the aid of which we were "told by your envoy has become a reality. And as I believe "that I cannot better express the wishes and intentions of my "Signoria, nor lay bare the truth more effectually than by "reading to your Holiness the instructions given me by my "Signoria, I ask permission to read the same." And having said this, I drew the instructions from my pocket and read them word for word.

His Holiness listened attentively and cheerfully, first to my discourse and then to the instructions; and after a few kind words replied, that, "Upon carefully considering what "I had said and read, it seemed to him that your Lord-"ships feared three things: the first, that the king of France "would not furnish any assistance; the second, that he was "himself lukewarm in the matter; and the third, lest he "should make terms with Messer Giovanni Bentivogli and "allow him to remain in Bologna, or perhaps, after having "expelled him, permit him to return. To the first of these "three," his Holiness said, "I reply, that I cannot more ef-"fectually prove to you the good will of the king of France "than by showing it to you under his own hand; and for this "his signature will suffice without looking for any other proof." And thereupon he called Monseigneur d'Aix, formerly Bishop of Sisteron, and made him produce the instructions which he had brought back with him from France, showing me the king's signature in his own hand, and read to me himself two paragraphs which treated of Bolognese matters. The first of these encouraged the Pope in this enterprise against Bologna, offering him four hundred to five hundred lances under Monseigneur d'Allegri or the Marquis of Mantua, or both of them, just as he might please. And in the second he said that the agreement which he had with Messer Giovanni had no importance for him, as it obliged him to protect Messer Giovanni only in his own states, but not in those of the Church, and advised the Pope to act "quickly, quickly," using these very words, at the same time suggesting to him by all means to avoid exciting the jealousy of the Venetians who are at Faenza. After that his Holiness read me the other letters from the king, and signed with his own hand; the one dated in the month of May, which Sisteron had brought with him, and the other of this month and directed to the Grand Master at Milan, ordering him to furnish four hundred to five hundred lances whenever called for either by Monseigneur d'Aix in person, or by any one else authorized for the purpose by the Pope. After having read these paragraphs and letters from the king, his Holiness said that he did not know what more he could show me to prove the good will of the king, and that this ought to suffice your Lordships. As to his own lukewarmness in this matter, he said that he was on the road, going in his own person, and that he did not believe that he could act with more zeal or earnestness than thus to go in his own person to direct the enterprise.' And as to the third point, the leaving Messer Giovanni in Bologna, or permitting him to return after having once driven him out, he said that he would on no account leave him there, and that it would be folly for Messer Giovanni to attempt to remain as a private citizen, as he certainly would not permit him to remain in any other capacity. And once having got rid of Messer Giovanni, it was his intention to settle matters in Bologna in such a way that in his time Messer Giovanni would never return there; but as to what any subsequent Pope might do in the matter, he said he did not know. His Holiness concluded by saying that it would be agreeable to him to have me accompany him, and that he thanked your Lordships for what you had promised him thus far, and that he felt assured that you would not fail in the rest, seeing the good faith of the king of France, upon which point you had had doubts; and that within a few days he would let me know something, etc.

I do not write what I said in reply, not wishing to weary your Lordships; but will only assure you that I conformed in all respects strictly to your instructions. Nor will I omit to mention that in the course of the interview his Holiness whispered something into the ear of Monseigneurs the Cardinals Volterra and Pavia, and then turned and said to me: "I have told you that I desire to bestow a signal benefit "upon your Signoria, but will not promise to do it now, as

"I could not perform it. Whenever I shall be able to do it, I "will promise, and shall not fail in the performance; I will do "it anyhow." Thereupon I rose from before the feet of his Holiness, and having withdrawn with Monseigneur d'Aix, who, as already stated, was present at my interview, the said Monseigneur d'Aix told me that all the difficulties he experienced in France in inducing his Majesty the king to consent to this enterprise had arisen from the fact that his Majesty did not believe that it would ever be carried out; but seeing now that it was really under way, the king's desire to serve the Pope had been doubled. I replied to him, that great astonishment had been created in Florence by the arrival there a few days since of an agent from Milan, sent by the Grand Master to Messer Giovanni to encourage him by assurances that the king would not fail him, etc. He answered that I ought not to be astonished at this, for that either the Grand Master had sent this agent *proprie motu* to render some one a service according to French custom, or if he had been sent with the consent of the king, it was that he saw that the affairs of Rome did not progress, and that really nothing had been begun. And that he himself was the less surprised at it, for being at court in presence of the king, after the treaty with the Pope had actually been made, his Majesty aloud in his presence bade an agent from Bologna to be of good cheer and fear nothing, for the Pope had asked his support only against Perugia, and that if he claimed it for any other purpose he would not serve him.

Having gone at about the twenty-second hour in the suite of the Pope to view the fortress of this place, which is very remarkable, his Holiness, seeing me, called me aside, and reiterated to me the same assurances that he had made in reply to my address in the morning, saying that he had arranged and settled most satisfactorily all questions that could keep your Lordships in doubt, and then repeated *verbum ad verbo* what he had said to me in the morning. And when I replied in the words of my instructions, that "your troops would not be the last," his Holiness said that he had three kinds of troops in his service, namely, his own, those of France, and yours. Of his own he had four hundred men-at-arms, well paid, which he would send in advance, and that he expected moreover one hundred Stradiotes, who were coming from the kingdom of Naples and whom he had supplied with money; and that he would also have the troops of Gianpaolo Baglioni, either under his own command, or that of some one else, as might seem best to him; and that he had his purse full of infantry; so that when all these troops were assembled yours might also come to take their place, as you did not want them to be the last; that he wished me to write all this to your Lordships, and that he would keep me informed from day to day of whatever might occur. He added, that he did not expect, nor did he ask, favors from the Venetians, whose sole aim was, and had been, to place themselves at the head of this enterprise by giving him their support. But that he had refused them, as he did not wish to concede to them what they had taken from the Church to his own great detriment and to your prejudice; and if he should not be able to do more than to persist in refusing to make such concessions to the Venetians, this of itself ought to induce your Lordships to hasten to co-operate with him, regardless of all other considerations; and the more so, as it was not to be presumed that he would stop there if his first efforts proved successful.

I replied in a becoming manner, confining myself, however, entirely to general terms; and cannot report on this first day more to your Lordships than what I have heard his Holiness say. But I presume from his last remarks that many days will not pass before he will ask you to start your troops, although those of the king of France may not yet have stirred; for it has been intimated to him to avail himself of these only in case of necessity, and not otherwise, because of the heavy expense which they would involve, and also to avoid incurring the hostility of this country, which seems so well disposed towards him.

Ramazotto, one of the captains of his Holiness, is here, and promises to raise two thirds of the mountain population here in favor of the Pope, who caresses him much. This Pontiff has constantly in his suite some six or seven cardinals, whose presence seems to be agreeable to him, either for the purpose of counselling with them or for other reasons. The other cardinals are dispersed at large through the surrounding places; but at the Pope's entrance into Viterbo they are all to be with him.

The route of his Holiness, according to what I hear, is to be the following: to-morrow he will remain here, on Sunday he goes to Viterbo, where he will remain three days; from there he goes to Orvieto, thence to Piegaio, and thence to Perugia, where he may remain a greater or less time. But his intentions are not known as to the way of settling the affairs of that place, or what arrangements he may make with Gianpaolo. It is said that the latter will come to meet the Pope, perhaps even before the latter leaves Viterbo. From Perugia the Pope will go to Urbino, where he proposes to levy four thousand infantry; and it is stated by persons in authority that before reaching Cesena the Duke of Ferrara will come to meet him, and the Marquis of Mantua likewise.

Nothing else occurs to me worth writing. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ felices valeant.*

Servus
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

CIVITA CASTELLANA, 28 August, 1506.

P. S. — I have forgotten to tell your Lordships that the Pope has said, even in full consistory, that Ferdinand, king of Naples and of Aragon, had some time ago given orders to his ambassador at Rome not to leave that city, as he wanted him to meet him at one of the neighboring ports, where he expected to be in a few days. But that he has since then written to the said ambassador to follow the court and find his Holiness; and thus the ambassador has come with a commission from that king to proceed to Bologna, according as the Pope might wish, and to make known to Messer Giovanni and to the government that, if they did not yield to the Church, they must look upon him as their enemy, and as their severest persecutor; and that he was prepared to come in person for the purpose of reducing them to submission. If on the contrary, however, they were disposed to make terms with the Pope, then he wished to be the mediator and conservator of such an accord, and would promise that neither the person of Messer Giovanni nor that of his children, nor their patrimonial estates, should in any way be molested. *Iterum valete.*

Die qua in literis.

Idem NICOLAUS.

LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 8th from Civita Castellana, which letter is enclosed with this. I did not send it sooner, as I did not want to trust to chance, it being an important letter and not written in cipher, as I did not bring any with me. Deeming it necessary to have it go this evening, I concluded to send it by an express, who is to leave at two o'clock in the night and promises to be in Florence to-morrow at the twenty-fourth hour. I have paid this express eighty carlini, and beg your Lordships will reimburse that sum to the Chancellor Biagio.

The Pope made his entrance into Viterbo to-day pontifically, and will continue his progress in the same manner. From Naples we learn that the Neapolitans are preparing to receive the king with all possible honors, and that Gonsalvo will go to meet him and do him homage. We also hear that the Venetians are raising a thousand infantry in the Romagna ; some say that these are intended for the Friuli, and others say that they are intended to keep Faenza in check, lest its inhabitants should commit some folly during the passage of the Pope.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

VITERBO, 30 August, 1506.

LETTER III.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and sent it by express, together with my despatch of the 28th, in which I gave a full account of the conversation I had with the Pope immediately after my arrival here. Since then his Holiness has made no further communication to me, nor have I made any attempt to see him ; and have no other news to write except that the Venetian ambassador has explained to his Holiness the levy of infantry which his Signoria are making in the Romagna, saying that it is their custom always to arm themselves whenever their neighbors do so. The report respecting the Emperor's having advanced to the confines of the Friuli had been started by the Venetians, but letters have been received here from Ferrara saying that there is no truth in it. It is believed, if this be so, that the ambassador has set the story afloat by order of his Signoria for the purpose of embarrassing the Pope, and to chill his ardor by this news at the very outset of this enterprise.

An agent of the Marquis of Mantua arrived here to-day by post. The object of his coming is not yet fully known, unless it be, as is said, that the Marquis has sent him to present his excuses for not being able to come and see his Holiness as he had promised. If this be true, then some will be apt to infer from it that perhaps the king of France retracts ; others believe that it is mere levity and fickleness on the part of the Marquis. So soon as I know the truth of the matter, I will communicate it to your Lordships. I have called upon Monseigneur Ghimel, the ambassador here of the king of France, and presented my respects to him as your Lordships' servant, in such terms as suggested themselves to me. He replied in the most becoming manner, and in the course of our conversation assured me that his Majesty had offered to the Pope five hundred lances under command of Monseigneur d'Allegri whenever he might want them, and that they were ready at his disposal.

Of the merits of this enterprise, I can say nothing more than what I have already written ; namely, that the Pope has taken the field in person, and moves on in the appointed manner and by the route which I have stated. He has not yet taken the infantry into pay, and does not intend to have any other troops than what I have mentioned to your Lordships. His own four hundred lances, with two crossbowmen for each lance, are under the Duke of Urbino, and commanded by Giovanni da Gonzaga ; two hundred of them are under the immediate command of the Prefect, and one hundred under that of Messer Ambrogio da Landriano. These are all together on the frontier of Perugia. Giovan da Sassatello commands the seventy-five that are in the Romagna, but has received orders to advance. The Pope has here with him a guard of fifty mounted crossbowmen, equivalent to twenty-five men-at-arms ; and this makes up the number of four hundred. These are the present forces of the Pope, and his own ; then he has the troops of Gianpaolo Baglioni, and expects those Stradiotes from Naples. We hear of no other preparations for this enterprise, nor of any infantry or of anything else that is required. It is said the Pope will enlist the infantry at Urbino, as I have already written, and will there organize all other matters.

Some of the banished from Furli are here, and are very discontented; they seem to think that they are sent from Herod to Pilate, without any visible result; they hope much, however, from this enterprise of the Pope's.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

VITERBO, this last day of August, 1506.

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LETTER IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

By the enclosed your Lordships will have been informed of all that has occurred up to yesterday. Amongst other things I told your Lordships that the Marquis of Mantua had communicated through his envoy to the Pope that he would not be able to meet him, in consequence of orders received from the king of France not to leave, etc., which has since then been confirmed; and moreover that the Marquis has sent an agent to Milan to ask Chaumont for leave of absence, with instructions, if he cannot obtain it there, then to proceed to France. Although this is regarded by many to be mere levity on the part of the Marquis, yet it has caused the Pope much displeasure, and has decided him to proceed in this enterprise with more solid foundations and greater regularity than hitherto. He has consequently sent Messer Antonio de Montibus, Auditor of the Chamber, to Bologna to inform the government of that city that his Holiness intends coming there, and that they must give proper orders for his reception, and must also have quarters provided within the Bolognese territory for five hundred French lances. His Holiness has furthermore ordered Messer Antonio to proceed afterwards to Milan to claim those troops; but the Pope will not go beyond Perugia, or at farthest Urbino, unless he hears that those French troops have started; and thus he will remain here some days longer than he intended, and will not leave to-morrow as originally contemplated. The reason why the Pope has changed his first purpose, not to avail himself of these French troops except in case of necessity, as I had reported, is the above-mentioned proceeding of the Marquis of Mantua; and also his wish, by thus starting the French troops, to check the Venetians, who are raising troops in the hope that by alarming the Pope he may allow them to take part in this enterprise and abandon France, and that thus he may be induced to cede to them Faenza and Rimini. Another reason is, that he wants to make sure of the French by fairly engaging them in this enterprise; and therefore he resolved yesterday to take this course. He tries with all the ingenuity at his command to reassure the Venetians, but that does not suffice them. They want to be sure not to be disturbed, and therefore they attempt in every possible manner to bar him the way, and to embarrass this enterprise with difficulties. I shall watch the result of all this, and keep your Lordships advised.

Messer Antonio will pass through your Lordships' dominion on his way to Bologna; he will go either through the city of Florence or some other place. As it may be desirable for you to communicate with him, so as to have more particular information about these matters, I have thought it well most respectfully to mention this to your Lordships, to whom I beg to recommend myself.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

VITERBO, 1 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

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LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and sent the letter, together with another despatch of the day previous, under cover of one from his Eminence of Volterra, by a courier who was going to France. I have informed you of the Pope's intention of sending the Auditor of the Chamber to Bologna, and thence to Milan for the French troops. His Holiness has since then decided that the Auditor shall stop at Bologna, and to send Monseigneur d'Aix, formerly Bishop of Sisteron, to Milan to start the troops, hoping that he may succeed more easily in doing it, as he himself had negotiated this matter with the king. He is to go by diligence and will leave to-morrow morning. The Auditor was to have left to-day, but it is evening now and as yet he has not started. I shall see what will take place to-morrow, and will advise your Lordships, who must not be surprised at all these changes; for with all these intrigues many changes have already been made, and many more will occur. Those who know the Pope say that with him one cannot place a thing over night and find it there the next day. The Pontiff will temporize, as I have said, between here and Urbino until he shall have received an answer from Milan; and it is generally believed that he will not begin to take fresh troops into his pay, or incur any other expenses, until after he shall have this answer, and until he knows that those French troops have started. The agent of Messer Giovanni Bentivogli here is greatly encouraged by seeing matters thus protracted, and affirms that he has promises from a certain king that he will not violate his pledge of protection. The Venetian Ambassador tries on the one hand to frighten the Pope with the coming of the Emperor, and on the other hand promises him certain success at Bologna provided he will cede Faenza and Rimini to the Venetians; but the Pope laughs at this, and does not listen to these propositions. It may however well happen, that, were the French to play him false, the Pope might possibly adopt that course. There would be no doubt as to the French, seeing the positive agreement which Monseigneur d'Aix brought with him, were it not that this backing out of the Marquis of Mantua keeps every one in suspense. I hear of nothing else, and recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

VITERBO, 2 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

P. S. — The Pope may perhaps go with the court to Montefiascone and Orvieto; that is to say, he would in person go to Montefiascone with a portion of the court; the remainder would go to Orvieto.

I say *perhaps*, so as to run less risk of being mistaken.

LETTER VI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and enclose that letter with this. Monseigneur d'Aix left to-day for Milan. I called upon him before his departure, and asked him whether there was anything that he wished me to say to your Lordships in relation to his voyage. He replied that nothing occurred to him, except that I might write to your Lordships that he was going by post to Milan, being sent by the Pope to demand those men-at-arms which according to agreement the king of France is to furnish the Pope ; that he would pass through Florence, and if his time permitted he would call upon your Lordships.

The Pope, as I have said in my letter of yesterday, will do nothing until he receives the answer from Monseigneur d'Aix, and will pass his time with the court wherever he may find it most convenient.

The ambassadors from Perugia to the Pope arrived here yesterday. Amongst them is Messer Vincenzio,* formerly judge of the district and Podesta there. I have not yet seen him, and do not know the object of this mission ; I can only guess that they want to settle the business of Gianpaolo. We shall see from day to day whether they succeed or not, and I will advise your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

VITERBO, 3 September, 1506.

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LETTER VII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 2d and 3d what was going on here, and sent the letters by Monseigneur d'Aix, who was going by diligence to Milan, for the purpose mentioned in my previous letters. The Pope left Viterbo yesterday morning, and lodged at Montefiascone; and to-day he has come here to Orvieto, where he will probably remain until the affairs of Perugia are settled. After that he will await the answer from Monseigneur d'Aix either at Perugia or Urbino, according to which he will decide with regard to this enterprise, either to move forward or return to Rome, unless he should look elsewhere for support and assistance, but which I do not believe.

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* In the Archives of Monte Comune, amongst the Acts of the Podesta, Vol. 345, Ann. 1502, we read, " Vincentius de Nobilibus, Miles et Comes de Monte Vibbiano de Perusio."

Negotiations for the settlement between Perugia, or rather Gianpaolo, and the Pope, are going on incessantly, and those ambassadors whom I have mentioned, and amongst whom is Messer Vincenzio, have come on here; they had an audience of the Pope at Viterbo the day before yesterday. In their address they congratulated his Holiness upon his contemplated visit, and encouraged him to come and see his city of Perugia. They then offered their service to him, and recommended themselves and the inhabitants of the city to his protection.

It is said that, after a good deal of talk, the Pope told them that he wanted possession of the forts held by Gianpaolo, also of the towers of the city gates, and that the ambassadors freely conceded them to him on behalf of their Signoria. Since then they are secretly occupied with the negotiation of this agreement, and they say that it is for this purpose that the Duke of Urbino and the Legate of Perugia have come here; they arrived this evening at dusk. We ought to see in a day or two what course this matter will take; at present, it is impossible to form a judgment as to what agreement may be arrived at; for until now the Pope has insisted that Gianpaolo should leave the city, or remain there merely as a private citizen and without any men-at-arms. He may however change his mind, partly from necessity, and partly through the persuasion of Gianpaolo's abetters, of which there are a goodly number at this court. The necessity would be the fact that Gianpaolo has a force of mounted men and infantry, which renders his expulsion difficult, and when this difficulty is shown to the Pope he will easily be persuaded that it would be more advantageous for him to avail himself of the services of Gianpaolo in his enterprise against Bologna than to attempt to drive him from Perugia, which, in case the Pope should not succeed in doing it, would impede his main enterprise; but that Bologna once taken, there would be no lack of means for conciliating

Perugia afterwards; and that it is always best to carry on one enterprise at a time, rather than two, as the one may interfere with the success of the other. These arguments give ground for believing that Gianpaolo could easily escape his doom for the present; and to gain time is everything for him.

I shall watch carefully to get at the real truth, and shall keep your Lordships fully informed, although, having left the regular road, I hardly know how to send you my letters. As for myself, I have not yet received any from your Lordships, and suppose they have gone to Rome.

Of the Emperor we have no news; but from Naples we hear that King Ferdinand is expected from hour to hour, and that Gonsalvo seems to be more pleased at it than the others. I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

ORVIETO, 5 September, 1506. *Secret. apud Papam.*

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LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

To-day is the 6th, and my letter of the 5th herewith enclosed informs your Lordships of the state of things here, and especially as to the affair of Gianpaolo, and what is generally thought of it. I hear since then that the Duke of Urbino and the Legate of Perugia, who arrived here yesterday, are shaping things in the way it was hoped for, namely, to save Gianpaolo; and that they have brought the Pope to be satisfied with availing himself of the services of Gianpaolo and his troops in this expedition against Bologna. Not that he takes him regularly as his Condottiere, or that he otherwise engages him; but he will give him a subvention for himself and his troops so long as they serve in this enterprise. Gianpaolo is to come here himself to render homage to the Pope, and he may arrive at any moment, so soon as an agreement upon this basis is definitely concluded. It is believed that the Pope will not change from this, as he will have men around him who will hold his hands behind his back, and will not permit him to change in matters that are for their advantage. It is said that Gianpaolo has one hundred and fifty light-horse and one hundred men-at-arms in fine condition.

Seeing the course which the affairs of Gianpaolo are taking, it is believed, if they go on as I have indicated above, that those of Messer Giovanni Bentivogli are likely to go the same way; and that the composition with Gianpaolo, made for the purpose of facilitating the enterprise against Messer Giovanni, may also lead to an arrangement with the latter; for the supporters of the former will be equally those of Messer Giovanni, as they anticipate no less advantages from it. And Messer Giovanni knows well that the Condottieri of the Pope will be no less serviceable to him than those of Bologna. Messer Giovanni has made the offer of four of his sons to the Pope; and there seems to be no doubt that, if he were to agree to come himself, the affair would be settled at once; nor will there be lacking persons here who will support him.

I know that it is somewhat presumptuous to judge of matters in advance, particularly of such as vary every hour; nevertheless, it seems to me that I can never be wrong in communicating to your Lordships the opinions of those who are experienced in these affairs, so that with your wonted wisdom you may yourselves form a better judgment.

We have no news from Naples; but there are letters here this morning from Venice of the 31st ultimo, written by Lascari to one of the prelates here, by which he informs him that four ambassadors from the Emperor have arrived there, who came all armed to the shore and demanded of the Senate free passage and provisions for the army of their master, and for himself, to Rome; and that they reported the army of their sovereign on the frontiers, but that the Emperor himself is still some six days' journey from Venice. Your Lordships will be able to learn the truth of all this by way of Ferrara.

His Holiness is to leave here within the present week, but I do not know the precise day; he will make one or two stops between here and Perugia, and will stay some days at the latter place to await the answer of D'Aix from Milan, and of Messer Antonio de Montibus from Bologna.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

ORVIETO, 6 September, 1506.

I had forgotten to inform your Lordships that the Bolognese Ambassador told me this morning that the Venetian Ambassador continued to urge the offer upon the Pope, in behalf of his Signoria, that, if he would cede to them Faenza and Rimini, they would, without the aid of any one, place Bologna and Messer Giovanni in his hands. I cannot say whether this be true, and how they can on the one hand be willing to attempt such an undertaking, whilst on the other hand they have the Emperor upon their frontiers.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

P. S. — As I have the opportunity of sending you a copy of this letter which came from Venice on the 31st of August, I transcribe it below.

[*Copy.*]

The King of the Romans intends doubtless to come into Italy, and takes all measures for that purpose with energy and diligence; for he has already started his artillery in the direction of Italy, and a part of his forces have reached Villach, and some detachments of infantry are even nearer to the confines of this republic. But these forces are insufficient to enable him to remodel Italy, which this prince boasts of intending to do; for they hardly number nine thousand men. And although they are, so to say, upon the very confines of the country, yet he says himself that he wants the Imperial army to enter Italy first under another commander, after which he will enter with the troops referred to above, which he will himself command in person. We have not heard yet whether the Imperial army has really started, nor even whether it is fully assembled, and yet he can do nothing without this army, and cannot control it at his pleasure, as he does that which he has collected and put on foot so promptly in Hungary. It is no wonder, therefore, that here they should regard with doubts what there they look upon as most certain. With all this they do not cease here to make preparations, and to a greater extent even than they are willing to divulge.

According to news received here by post, the King of the Romans was four or five days ago at Gratz, a place about two hundred miles distant from the frontiers of the republic. On Saturday evening there arrived here three ambassadors of the aforesaid king; the fourth has remained sick in the Friuli. They had an audience to-day, and according to what we hear they ask for free passage and provisions for their army; we shall know more after they shall have received their answer, in the course of three days. They and their servants came fully armed to the very shore, seemingly wishing to say, If the ambassadors are so valiant, what will you think of their troops?

Valete.

VENICE, 31 August, 1506.

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LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote my last letters to your Lordships on the 5th and 6th instant, and sent them yesterday morning by one of my own servants to the captain of Cortona, with orders to forward them promptly by special messenger to your Lordships. I wrote very fully, and, presuming these letters to have reached you safely, I do not now repeat what I wrote. I have nothing of special interest to say; but as Piero del Bene is about to start for Florence, I did not wish to let him go without a letter from me. Gianpaolo has not yet arrived, but is expected to-day, without fail; and a number of his adherents have gone out on horseback to meet him, for they know that he has left Perugia to come here. We shall see what his coming will bring forth, of which your Lordships shall be duly informed.

Affairs here continue in the same state as when I last wrote, and, as opinions of them have not changed, I shall say nothing further on the subject. The Pope leaves to-morrow and goes to Castel della Pieve, and will thence proceed to Perugia, unless some new incident should make him change his plans.

At this moment, it being the twentieth hour, Gianpaolo Baglioni has arrived with about fifty horse. *Valete.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

ORVIETO, 8 September, 1506.

LETTER X.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

The enclosed I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, thinking to send it by Piero del Bene, who however did not take it, as he started at the very time when I had gone to the lodgings of the Cardinal of Pavia; I therefore send it with this, although it contains nothing important. Gianpaolo Baglioni came to Orvieto yesterday at about the twentieth hour, as mentioned in the enclosed; he presented himself immediately at the feet of his Holiness, and had a formal audience. The Pope left Orvieto this morning and has come here to Castel della Pieve; whilst Gianpaolo with his suite, accompanied by the Duke of Urbino, has gone back by the direct road to Perugia. His Holiness leaves here to-morrow morning to go to Castiglione del Lago; and before going to Perugia he will probably pass two or three days on the lake for pleasure, and may then make his entrance into Perugia about Sunday.

The arrangement with Gianpaolo is said to be as follows: Gianpaolo gives up to the Pope all the fortresses of the state of Perugia, as also the gates of the city, which is already done; he places one or two of his sons as hostages in the hands of the Duke of Urbino as guaranty for the faithful observance on his part of the terms of the convention with the Pope; and submits as a good son to the authority of the holy Church. The Pope places a garrison of five hundred infantry in the city of Perugia, and at each of the city gates fifty men, or more if required. Gianpaolo is bound to serve the Pope with all his men-at-arms in the enterprise against Bologna, and the Pope is to give him a certain subvention for the raising of these men, the precise amount of which is not known. All these measures are now being put into execution, and everything is to be finally completed before the Pope leaves Perugia. Some of the Perugine banished are with the Pope: amongst them is a son of Grifonetto Baglioni, and one of Pompejo delli Oddi; Carlo Baglioni is not amongst them. All these proscribed count on returning to Perugia with the Pope, who has not sent them away, notwithstanding the arrangement with Gianpaolo.

To-day we have the news that the Marquis of Mantua is coming to see his Holiness the Pope, and that at this very hour he may already be on the way; this news is regarded as positively true. This movement of the Marquis has caused a change of opinion here respecting this enterprise against Bologna; and it is supposed that an arrangement with the Pope will become more difficult for Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, as the enterprise against Bologna becomes easier for the Pope; for it is assumed that the French will hold for the Pope, although there is as yet no reply from D'Aix. But it is conjectured, because the Marquis has given them to understand here, as I have already written, that he has sent an agent to Chaumont for permission to serve the Pope; with instructions, in case of refusal, to proceed to France and ask it direct of the king. And having now informed them here of his coming, it is naturally inferred, from the brief time elapsed between the one resolution and the other, that the permission came from Milan and not from France, and that thus they adhere to the old agreement which was brought here by D'Aix. And there can be no doubt that, if France does not play him false, the enterprise against Bologna will be carried through without fail, despite the attempts to prevent it by agreements. We must now see what time may bring, and make up our minds accordingly.

I must not omit to tell your Lordships that, on meeting the Cardinal of Pavia this morning on the road, he called me to him and said: "Secretary, Messer Filiberto has written to me "that, whilst passing through Florence, some citizens had told "him that the Pope deceived himself if he believed that Flor-"ence would aid him, even to the extent of one horse, in his "enterprise against Bologna; and that the republic would at no "price consent to it." I answered him that I did not believe it; that such things were said by idle persons who did not understand the merits of these matters; and that our republic was accustomed to go forward and never to turn back; and that if the Pope did not recede from his projects and his promises, our republic would not fall short one iota from her engagements. He replied, that he believed me, and that he had not been willing to say anything to the Pope about it, so as not to irritate him or make him indignant. *Bene valete!*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

CASTEL DELLA PIEVE, 9 September, 1506. *Secret. apud Papam.*

P. S. — The Pope will remain Friday and Saturday at Castiglione del Lago, and on Sunday will go to Perugia; but he may possibly stay longer on the lake and on your frontier. I give you this information, so that if you should deem it well to present to his Holiness some wine or other choice product of your country, your Lordships may know his whereabouts. I am sure that it would prove most acceptable to him.

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LETTER XI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last letters were of the 8th and 9th, written from Castel della Pieve, and were sent by way of Cortona. On the 10th, the Pope came to Castiglione del Lago; and although he had said that he would remain there all this day, yet he went yesterday to Passignano, a castle about five miles from Perugia, into which city he will to-morrow make his pontifical entrance. Since my last, I have received your Lordships' letters of the 7th and 9th, and, deeming it well to communicate the advices contained in yours of the 9th to the Pope, I called upon his Holiness and made them known to him. He told me that he had the same information as to the king of Aragon, but that he did not believe that Gonsalvo would march against him, but rather that he would take to flight. And so he said that he did not believe the news about the Emperor, as he knew for certain that the Emperor was not in a situation to make a descent into Italy; and that all these reports were mere inventions of the Venetians to suit their own purposes. As to what your Lordships say in your letter of the 7th, that his Holiness should be informed, etc., I can assure you that he is reminded of it every day. But if France should play him false, and if this rumored descent of the Emperor should not be true or speedy, then it might well be that there would be no remedy, and that in that case the Pope should think less of the injuries to the Church, or of the dangers to others, than of his own shame, which would be great indeed if he were to return to Rome without having attempted anything after having gone so far. But those who know the Pope's nature, as your Lordships do, will not doubt this; there is no remedy for it, however, except for ourselves to do that which it would be judged pernicious to allow others to do.

A great many prudent people think, as I have already written, that these stories about the Emperor are exaggerated by Venetians in France and here, either for the purpose of embarrassing the projects of the Pope by restraining him, and by troubling the waters in France; or for the purpose of seeing whether they cannot induce the king to make some new treaty, by which they would gain in Italy and out of it, if nothing else, at least such credit as would facilitate the execution of their schemes. The Pope himself is of this opinion, for when I communicated those letters to him he said to me, "These "Venetians make the Emperor move at their pleasure." But all will be settled if the Marquis of Mantua comes, and if the king of France moves willingly, of which they had some hopes when I last wrote to your Lordships, since when I have heard nothing further.

By my other letter I informed your Lordships that, despite all the conventions made with Gianpaolo, the Pope will take with him all the banished, excepting Carlo Baglioni and Girolamo della Penne. Yesterday evening at Passignano, where we stopped over night, the Pope had them called to him, and said to them, that for good reasons he did not wish them to enter into Perugia with him; that he would leave them there, but would send for them after he should himself have been two or three days in the city. He advised them to be of good cheer, for their affairs would be readily arranged; that he wanted anyhow to put down Gianpaolo, and settle things so that they could remain secure within Perugia. That it was for this reason that he had ordered the fortresses to be given up to him, and a garrison placed in Perugia to suit himself, and that the sons of Gianpaolo should remain at Urbino. That he intended to withdraw the men-at-arms of Gianpaolo from the Perugine territory, and take them with him, but not under the command of Gianpaolo, whom he wanted always to remain in person near the Duke. But that he had no intention of taking his life on account of the old troubles; but that if he committed the least venial sin, he would punish him for all put together.

These proscribed complain that they are not allowed to enter Perugia with the Pope; and see in it a trick of those who wish to save Gianpaolo, and who, unable to make the Pope by a single step desist from his enterprise, endeavor by this means to make him withdraw from it little by little. And they believe that the disturbance which their return to Perugia might create has been used as a scarecrow to frighten the Pope. These proscribed fear lest those who have caused the Pope not to allow them to enter with him into Perugia should succeed in persuading him to let them remain a few years longer in exile. All their hopes of being able to return to Perugia were based upon their going in with the Pope, as their own friends could then sustain their cause. Another ground of anxiety for them is, that they see all these matters placed in the hands of the Duke of Urbino, who is to hold the hostages as well as the person of Gianpaolo himself, according to what the Pope told them. It seems to them that everything is thus placed in the hands of the adverse party; but above all things they fear lest the garrison which is to be placed in Perugia should be some of the Duke's infantry; they are resolved therefore to do all in their power to dissuade the Pope from this, and to induce him to raise this garrison either in your Val di Chiana, or from other places that can be depended upon. Your Lordships will therefore think of what you wish done in case the request should be made to permit the constables of the Church to raise troops in the Val di Chiana.

In the same way as these banished have spoken to me of their affairs, so have Messer Vincenzio and other agents of Gianpaolo spoken to me. I listen to them all, but do not commit myself, and say to each that they are right. I do this because I do not know which will be best for our republic; nor do I know your Lordships' views on the subject.

It is said that the Legate of Perugia, who went with Gianpaolo from Orvieto to Perugia, is to return here to-day to settle this affair of the banished with the Pope, as well as other matters relating to that city. *Valete.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

CORCIANO, 12 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

LETTER XII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and enclose the letter herewith. To-day the Pope made his solemn entrance into Perugia, leaving the banished, who accompanied him, at the place indicated in my letter of yesterday, and with such hopes as I therein stated.

Monseigneur de Narbonne did not have an audience of the Pope until yesterday, having gone from here to Corciano, where the Pope had stopped. Up to the present, it is not known what Monseigneur de Narbonne communicated to his Holiness, but evidently it was not agreeable to him. Since then we learn that he dissuaded the Pope in the name of the king from the enterprise against Bologna, alleging as one of the reasons the proposed incursion of the Emperor, and pointing out to him that, inasmuch as the allegiance of the state of Milan to the king of France was but feeble and uncertain, his Majesty could not risk stripping himself for the purpose of serving his Holiness. The Pope is very much irritated by this, but has nevertheless decided to carry out this enterprise by himself, even if all other help fails him. He has to-day expedited Ramazotto with money for the troops already raised, and has written briefs to your Lordships and to the Duke of Ferrara, asking of each permission that Ramazotto as his constable may levy troops for his account in your respective dominions. And he says that before reaching Urbino he wants to have six to eight thousand infantry together, with which he intends marching towards Bologna. It is believed that the Marquis of Mantua may perhaps reach Urbino this evening, and that he will serve the Pope in person. These several reports differ, as your Lordships will observe; but when one has to write every day, one must follow them, and that must serve as my excuse.

Touching the affairs of Gianpaolo, I must refer to my enclosed; and will only add, that since the Pope is here with all these reverend prelates, and notwithstanding the fact that the troops of the Church are quartered all around these gates, whilst those of Gianpaolo are at a somewhat greater distance, yet the Pope and the Sacred College are more at the discretion of Gianpaolo than he is at theirs. And if Gianpaolo does no harm to him who came to deprive him of his state, it must be attributed to his good nature and humanity. How these matters will end, I do not pretend to know; but we shall see within the six or eight days that the Pope remains here. Once Gianpaolo said that there had been two ways for him to save his state; the one by force, and the other by humility and by trusting the friends who counselled him to it. That he had not been willing to employ the first, but had adopted the second, and for that reason had put everything into the hands of the Duke of Urbino. It was this Duke who had induced him to come to Orvieto to see the Pope, and to do all the other things that have happened. The troops that are to guard the public square and the gates, and which, as I advised you, were to have been in Perugia before the entrance of the Pope, are not yet there, although the Pope is; this was one of the things confided to the Duke of Urbino; it is said, however, that they will be here within a couple of days. I have nothing else to communicate, but to recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PERUGIA, 13 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

LETTER XIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and sent the letter together with another of mine of the 12th by a courier of Cortona, and the captain of that place will have forwarded them to your Lordships. Amongst other things I mentioned that Ramazotto had been sent by the Pope to levy troops; and I believed that he had already started for that purpose yesterday. Meeting him, however, at court this morning, he told me that he would receive his final instructions to-day, and would start to-morrow morning. If he comes to see me before then, as he has promised, I will charge him to deliver this to your Lordships. He has orders to raise at least one thousand men, and, if he can, as many as fifteen hundred.

As I wrote your Lordships yesterday, notwithstanding the embassy of Monseigneur de Narbonne, the Pope is more eager than ever for this enterprise against Bologna. Nor does he seem to despair entirely of France; for the first advices of D'Aix keep him in doubt. And although contradictory decisions have come from there, yet the Pope is bent upon going forward; and if he really sends Ramazotto off to-day, it will be a significant proof. Every one looks upon it as a very bold undertaking for the Pope to go forward if France fails him, and all await the result with anxiety. Many apprehend that, as a last desperate act, he will throw himself into the arms of the Venetians; they find it difficult, on the other hand, to understand how the Venetians can openly declare in favor of this enterprise, if the king of France refuses so to declare himself; and they say that his Majesty either cannot or will not aid the Pope. If he will not, then it is not reasonable that he would like the Venetians to gain that favor with the Pope which he is not willing to secure for himself, and that the Pope, in his dissatisfaction with the king of France, should ally himself intimately with the Venetians. But if he cannot, and the reason be the apprehended incursion of the Emperor into Italy, then surely the same considerations that keep the king from going forward would equally restrain them. Many others say that the French do not consider the matter so closely, and that they are indifferent about others doing what they themselves have declined to do; and that they estimate and judge these matters quite differently. Time, the father of events, will show us the result of all this; but it seems to me that I am not wrong if, in informing you of what is taking place here, I write you also what is said here about these matters by the courtiers, and by wise and practical men.

It is not known whether any other decision has been come to as regards the Perugine proscribed. Gianpaolo says that they may return at their pleasure, but if they are cut to pieces he will not be held responsible for it. From what I hear, it seems to me that the subvention which it was intended to give to Gianpaolo is likely to be converted into a regular engagement (Condotta). But it is said that the Pope does not wish to have it exceed one hundred men-at-arms, whilst Gianpaolo is not willing to reduce the number he now has, which is over one hundred and fifty; but this matter will anyhow be settled in some satisfactory way. Your Lordships need have no apprehensions upon this point, for, according to what we see, the relations between Gianpaolo and the Pope are steadily improving.

Nothing positive is said as yet as to the time when the Pope will leave here; it is supposed, however, that he may go about Sunday next. *Valete.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PERUGIA, 14 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

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LETTER XIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote yesterday to your Lordships, and sent my letter by the Ferrara post under cover of letters from his Eminence of Volterra; believing them to have arrived safely, I do not now repeat the same. Since then I received last night your Lordships' letter of the 11th, and at once called upon the Pope and read to him the information it contained. He seemed to be aware of the death of the king of Poland, but does not believe in that of the son of the king of Hungary, and affirms that, if it were true, the Emperor could not attempt to come into Italy, and that in fact he will not come anyhow.

I communicated furthermore to his Eminence of Pavia the paragraph which replies to the letter which Messer Filiberto had written him. He was much pleased at it, and renewed his assurances to me that he had not spoken of it to any one beyond his Eminence of Volterra and myself. I thanked him again for this, in the name of your Lordships.

This morning some of the troops from the duchy of Urbino began to arrive; they are probably those that are to constitute the garrison of this place, in accordance with the stipulations of the agreement. The proscribed have not yet arrived, nor has anything further been heard of them.

It is reported that the Pope will leave day after to-morrow, and move towards Urbino, and that he will make his first halt at Agobbio, or perhaps at Fratta. I believe in his departure, for he has settled everything here in good shape, and has nothing more to do here.

Respecting the enterprise against Bologna the opinion continues the same, that the Pope is most eager for it. Ramazotto has received his orders, and leaves this morning. I shall send this letter by a person who goes to Florence by post. Speaking this morning with the agent of Messer Giovanni, he told me that the Pope was beginning to listen to the Venetians, and that it might easily be that he arranged with them to unite in this enterprise. He seemed to regard this as very favorable, because he could not believe but what the king of France would lend his aid to Messer Giovanni in case the Venetians should join the Pope and openly declare against him, as the king would not permit others to do that which he had refused to do himself.

Of Monseigneur d'Aix there is no further news that I know of.

Yesterday I had a long conversation with Messer Ercole Bentivogli, who has come here with the Duke of Urbino. His opinions with regard to the Pope are confused; and he says that there is but one way in which the Pope can succeed in driving Messer Giovanni from Bologna; and that is by subjecting him to a constant expenditure of money; as, for instance, by going to Imola, and from there to spread through the surrounding places some six or seven hundred men-at-arms and five or six thousand infantry, and scour the neighborhood during the winter; and then in the spring raise a large force, and threaten the country with devastation. He seems convinced that Messer Giovanni would not support such a campaign, being unwilling to spend what little money he has without being sure of his safety, lest he should find himself afterwards homeless and poor. He seems to have no doubt that the Pope will adopt this plan; and speaking on this subject with one of the gentlemen here, he told me that this is really the plan which the Pope has decided upon.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PERUGIA, 15 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

LETTER XV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships this morning of what was going on here, and sent the letter by Zitolo, who was returning by post to Florence. As another person is about to leave now, I will not lose the opportunity of sending your Lordships a line about what I have learnt since.

The Perugian exiles have returned this morning, but only the old ones; the more recent ones, such as Carlo Baglioni and those who were concerned with him in the homicide, remain in exile. I believe that, if the Pope were to give the order, they would also be allowed to return, which would be a great harm to Gianpaolo, as it would deprive him of the large possessions which he would have to restore to these exiles, who have still many old friends; and the minds of men who have been accustomed to look only to one man begin to be diverted from him. On the other hand, seeing the many supporters of Gianpaolo, and that his credit and reputation have increased rather than diminished by all these changes, it is more generally believed that these exiles would be cut to pieces if they are not wise enough to withdraw of their own accord.

The Pope has this morning declared in full consistory that the help promised him by France was ready; this, however, amounts to no more than what I have indicated in previous letters. He said, furthermore, that the Venetians had given him to understand that, since the projects of the Emperor have been abandoned, and the apprehensions on that account in great measure dispelled, they were not only well pleased with this enterprise against Bologna, but offered him whatever assistance he might himself desire. This is all I have for the moment to communicate to your Lordships, except to recommend myself.

Some say that the Pope will leave on Monday; others name Friday. The Marquis has not yet come, and it is now the twentieth hour.

Servus

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Perugia, 16 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

LETTER XVI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My last was of the 16th; I have not written since for want of the convenience of sending my letters, and nothing of sufficient importance has occurred to warrant the sending of an express.

The Marquis of Mantua arrived here on the 17th, and was met by the whole court. Yesterday he had a long audience of the Pope, but the result is not known as yet. I have talked with some of his suite, with whom I had a previous friendly acquaintance; and on asking them as to what the Marquis said of this enterprise, they replied, that the Marquis, being a soldier, naturally liked war, but that he did not like it near his own house or against his friends; and they hinted to me that he would do all he could to bring about an agreement.

Six ambassadors from Bologna are expected here; they may arrive at any hour, and we shall then see whether an agreement is likely to be effected; and so soon as I know I will inform your Lordships.

I called upon the Marquis to pay my respects on your behalf; he thanks you, and offers his services in return, etc., etc.

As already mentioned to your Lordships in my previous letters, the exiles from here, with exception of Carlo Baglioni and those who were concerned with him in the last murder, have returned, and are making unceasing efforts to settle their matters with Gianpaolo. There are difficulties as to who will answer for each of them. Gianpaolo says that he will be responsible for himself and his house, but that he cannot guarantee them against strangers or the whole country; that, however, does not satisfy the exiles. On the other hand, they cannot find any one who will answer for them, as no one here is willing openly to declare against Gianpaolo, who has been very cunning in this matter, having asked all the friends of the exiles to be security for him, so that, having promised it to him, they cannot be asked or compelled to answer for the others. Owing to this difficulty of finding security, there has been some talk of restoring to these exiles their possessions, provided they will not remain in Perugia. I do not know how they will settle it, but I do know that Gianpaolo and his friends are doing all they can to prevent any arrangement. Gianpaolo opposes all sorts of difficulties to the return of these exiles, and above all to the restitution of their possessions, which yield a revenue of about four thousand florins.

Whilst I had gone out yesterday to meet the Marquis of Mantua, the Pope sent two of his grooms to my house to ask me to come to him. After my return I showed myself at court, and remained there all of yesterday; but not a word was said to me. I surmise that the Pope wanted that your troops should advance, but that he has since then concluded to defer it.

All idea of the Emperor's coming into Italy has been given up here by the court, and it is said that this is in consequence of certain fresh letters received from Venice, which show that the project is entirely abandoned. It is reported that the Pope will leave here on Monday or Tuesday next, and follow the route which I have mentioned in a former letter.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

PERUGIA, 19 September, 1506.

I have omitted to tell your Lordships that the one hundred Stradiotes, which the Pope had told me he expected from Naples, have arrived, and that they are fine-looking men and well mounted.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

P. S. — To-day is the 20th, and it is understood that the Pope has changed his plans and will not send San Pietro in Vincola* into the Romagna, and perhaps will not even send his troops there; and that, if he does send them there in advance of himself, they will be accompanied by Bishop Pazzi,† or by some other prelate of similar rank. Notwithstanding what I wrote you yesterday, we hear from Venice that the king of France will act openly with the Venetians if the Emperor should after all determine to come into Italy; and that they have replied to the ambassadors of the Emperor that he must come unarmed; and as these demanded on behalf of their master the sum of sixteen thousand ducats, in virtue of the obligation subscribed by them when he came to Livorno, the Venetians replied that it was not sixteen thousand, but about four or five thousand, which they would send him at their convenience; whereupon the ambassadors left dissatisfied.

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* This is Galeotto Franciotto della Rovere, Cardinal with the title of S. Pietro in Vincola, which title had been borne by Giuliano della Rovere before his election as Pope under the name of Julius II.

† This was the Bishop of Arezzo, who afterwards, in 1508, became the Archbishop of Florence.

The Pope will leave here on Tuesday and go to Fratta, and Bishop Pazzi goes into the Romagna.

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LETTER XVII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

This morning I wrote to your Lordships the events of the day, and sent my letter to the commandant of Cortona by a person who was returning there. Since then we have the news that the exiles of Furli have tried to return within the walls of that place, but being discovered they withdrew shouting, "Marco! "Marco!" and that they had both infantry and mounted men with them, which they had drawn from the Venetian dominions. Your Lordships ought to have more full and reliable information about this at Florence. The Pope has been greatly irritated by this occurrence, and has resolved to send all his troops in that direction, it seeming to him also very convenient with regard to his enterprise against Bologna, and having no further need of his troops near him until he reaches Furli. The Pope imagines, moreover, that the sending of his troops ahead on that road will add reputation to his enterprise, and at the same time keep things quiet at Furli. And so as to have some one with these troops who is competent to settle matters and regulate that place, he has sent with them the Cardinal San Pietro in Vincola, Legate of the Romagna; and I hear that Bishop Pazzi is to accompany him.

The men-at-arms are being reviewed to-day, and on Monday the Cardinal leaves, unless he should go to-morrow morning; the Pope, however, may remain here a few days longer, as he can do so without losing time, having sent his men-at-arms ahead. I will keep your Lordships promptly informed of whatever occurs, and recommend myself most humbly.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secretary.

PERUGIA, 19 September, 1506.

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LETTER XVIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 19th, and sent the letter by way of Cortona; I afterwards wrote again on the same day, but kept the letter until the 20th, and sent it by Andrea Carnesecchi, who was returning to Florence.

It is now the morning of the 21st, and to-day the Pope, after having dined, will go to Fratta on his route, unless he should change his mind; he is still awaiting the decision of the king as to the French troops. I wrote to your Lordships, that, in the pacification and settlement of matters here between the proscribed and Gianpaolo, amongst other difficulties one had arisen as to the guaranties and sureties for the peace which had to be given by each to the other. These sureties have since been given, and this morning, after a solemn mass, at which the Pope assisted, this peace was formally declared. The returned exiles will have their properties restored to them, which, as I have already written, yield a revenue of four thousand florins of the country. Gianpaolo goes with the Pope, and his troops march with the others. I wrote that it had been decided to send San Pietro in Vincola with the troops in advance to Furli, on account of the disturbances that have broken out there, and that Bishop Pazzi was to accompany him. This decision has since then been changed, and the Bishop alone is to go there, and I believe that this will be carried out, although he has not yet started. This is all that I have to communicate in relation to the affairs of the Pope, and I beg your Lordships not to be surprised at being two or three days without letters from me, but to accept my not writing as proof that there is nothing worth writing about.

From what your Lordships say in yours of the 19th, the affairs of the Emperor, according to the news from Venice, are cooling off, whilst, according to information from other quarters, they are growing warmer; and but a few days since the news from Venice represented them as becoming warmer, and from other quarters we heard they were growing cooler. I am unable to judge of the cause or the truth of these changes.

We have no news either from Naples or from King Ferdinand. I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PERUGIA, 21 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

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LETTER XIX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 21st from Perugia, and sent the letter by Giuliano Lapi. The Pope left Perugia on the same day and went to Fratta; yesterday he came here to Agobbio; to-day he goes to Santiano, ten miles from here, and to-morrow he will go to a castle about ten miles farther, but the name of which I do not know. The day after, he will go to Urbino; how long he may remain there, however, I cannot tell. From Urbino he intends going to Cesena by the mountain road, so as to avoid passing through Rimini. He will endeavor to settle matters in Cesena and then proceed to Furli, where all his troops, who went there with Gianpaolo and the other captains through La Marca, will probably make a halt. Bishop Pazzi left Perugia yesterday morning, and went by the direct route to Furli to keep things quiet there until the arrival of the Pope, who hopes to restore peace and order there, and will then decide finally with regard to his enterprise against Bologna; for by this time the Bolognese ambassadors must have arrived there. The answer from France whether their troops are to advance beyond Parma must also have arrived, and we shall then know, if not sooner, whether we are to have peace or war. The whole court is of opinion that some arrangement will be brought about, and yet all depends upon the French troops, although, as I have several times written, the Pope has declared that he will carry out this enterprise anyhow, even without the aid of the French troops.

I cannot say how long the Pope may remain at Urbino, and how many days he will take to go there, but your Lordships can form as good a judgment of it as I can here. I have nothing else to write, as there is really nothing new.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus
Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secretary.

Agobbio, 23 September, 1506.

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LETTER XX.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 23d from Agobbio, and gave you the order of march which the Pope would take to reach Furli, and to which he has thus far conformed; for to-day he made his entrance into Urbino, where it is said he intends remaining until Monday, and then proceeding on his journey. I have written that the affairs of Perugia were settled in the manner mentioned in several of my letters, so that we have only Bologna to think of; but that this enterprise remains in suspense until the arrival of the Bolognese ambassadors, and until the receipt of the reply from France, whether their troops are to pass Parma or not; and that we shall then see whether we are to have peace or war. I have nothing new to say upon this point, as no further intelligence has been received from France, nor have the Bolognese ambassadors arrived yet. I can only assure your Lordships again, that the Pope is hotter than ever for this enterprise, and that within the last two days, speaking confidentially of this affair, he said, that by his leaving Rome he had shown to the whole world his determination to reduce all the cities belonging to the Church to proper obedience and to deliver them from their tyrants, and that so far as in him lay he would show again that such was his intention; but that if those who had promised him their aid failed him, he would, etc., etc. Those who best know the temper of the Pope believe, that, if he is to throw himself headlong into any affair, this would be the least perilous into which he could precipitate himself. And they have come to this conclusion because the Pope has gone so far with his will and his demonstrations, that he must either carry out his first intention, or hastily adopt such other course as may seem best to him; or that he deludes himself with the thought of some honest arrangement, if not in reality yet in appearance. But such an honest arrangement seems difficult to find. That he will succeed according to his original design is not believed, owing to the conduct of the French; but it is generally feared lest he throw himself headlong into some worse danger.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Urbino, 25 September, 1506.

I stated in my previous letter that the Pope's troops, and Gianpaolo with his men-at-arms, had gone by La Marca towards Furli; this has proved to be a fact, although we have not yet heard whether Gianpaolo in person has already left Perugia.

The infantry of the Duke of Urbino, that had come to Perugia as garrison of the gates and of the public square of Perugia, did not remain there, but have gone with the troops towards La Marca.

The Marquis of Mantua accompanies the Pope regularly with one hundred mounted crossbowmen, which he brought with him from Mantua. *Iterum valete.*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secretary.

LETTER XXI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and enclose the letter with this. I have now to inform your Lordships that Messer Antonio de Montibus has returned from Bologna, and reports its citizens ready to give every proof of being well disposed towards the Holy Church, provided the Pope respects existing treaties; but if he attempts to change them, they are prepared to defend themselves. Messer Antonio makes great report of the preparations made by Messer Giovanni; it is said, however, that these preparations are calculated rather to make enemies than to gain friends, because they oblige the citizens to arm themselves at their own expense; and there are many other measures of similar character that will provoke hostility rather than friendly support.

I conversed this morning with the representative of Messer Giovanni here, and asked him whether the ambassadors would come; he said that they had started to come, but, owing to certain declarations made by Messer Antonio de Montibus, they had become doubtful as to their safety, and had therefore written for a safe-conduct from the Pope, which he had offered orally, but declined to give in writing; and that, relying upon these assurances of the Pope, they had been written to, and that he believed they were now on the way.

Yesterday letters were received from France, which seem to have given great pleasure to the Pope, for he expressed the opinion, within hearing of every one, that he would have the French troops anyhow, and actually held in his hands a list of the officers and troops that are to come. More than this he has not communicated, and I am not able, therefore, to give any further particulars.

It is said that the Pope will leave on Tuesday and go in the direction of Cesena.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

URBINO, September 26, 1506. *Secretary.*

LETTER XXII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote yesterday to your Lordships, and enclosed my letter of the 25th at the same time, and sent both by way of the Borgo. I have nothing of interest to communicate in this; but as the courier leaves for Florence and may possibly arrive there before my above-mentioned letters, I would not let him go without a line from me.

Yesterday evening, after having despatched my letters by way of the Borgo, I received your Lordships' letters of the 22d and 24th, with the news from France and other parts. I shall use the information as I may judge opportune, although the

Pope must have received the same intelligence direct from France, for he had letters from there the day before yesterday, and is very hopeful of receiving troops from there, although, according to what I hear, no formal resolution to that effect has been received from there. I have written in my last about the Bolognese ambassadors, and the cause of the delay in their coming.

The Pope leaves here on Tuesday and goes to Santa Fiore, a borough of some hundred houses, so that I believe that one half the court or more will go towards Cesena to await the Pope there, and I shall probably be one of these, as it is impossible to follow him in such little villages; and as, moreover, it is not likely that anything of moment will occur during the two days required to go to Cesena. I have nothing else to say in this letter, unless it be that the Pope becomes daily more determined to go ahead, and to carry this enterprise into effect. *Valete!*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Cancel.

URBINO, 27 September, 1506.

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LETTER XXIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI: —

My last to your Lordships was of yesterday, when I wrote you such unimportant matters as had occurred here, and which were mainly an account of the Pope's journey, and that he was to leave to-morrow for Cesena, which he will do unless he changes his mind. He will take three days to reach Cesena, and will not go by Montefiore,* but will go to-morrow to Macerata, and so move on from castle to castle until he reaches Cesena, where he may remain some days and come to a definite conclusion respecting this enterprise; for by that time he must have received the final resolve of the king of France. Yesterday the Pope held a long conference, at which were present the Duke of Urbino, the Venetian ambassador, and Monsignore di Pavia. It has not transpired what subjects were discussed, but it is supposed that it related mainly to this enterprise, and to the guaranty of security which the Venetians ask of the Pope through the king of France. His Holiness promises not to attack them, which corresponds with the information which your Lordships have received from France, according to which the king advises the Pope to satisfy the Venetians in some way upon this point, as your Lordships state in your letter before the last, of the 24th instant. It is said that the Pope is willing to give his verbal promise to the effect that during his lifetime he will in no way disturb them. But it seems that this does not satisfy the Venetians, who desire to have a formal and authentic obligation; and thus they are working at this matter. The more the Pope advances, the deeper he becomes involved in this enterprise; and they, that is to say the Venetians and the king of France, are watching for him to get into some strait, so as to bring him to bow to their will; and if the king holds firm to the Venetians, they may possibly succeed. But I have been told by one who is quite familiar with these intrigues, that, although the king hopes to humble the Pope in this way, yet the Pope will most assuredly humble the king, and will drive the spurs into his flank, if this resolution as to the troops does not come at the Pope's convenience. What spurs the Holy Father may be able to apply for this object I know not, but your Lordships can form your own judgment of the matter.

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* In the previous letter Machiavelli called this place Santa Fiore, which shows how uncertain and variable proper names then were.

From your Lordships' last letters, of the 24th and 26th, I have learned the agreement between Gonsalvo and the king of Naples, which was already known here through some other source. Nevertheless I have communicated all the information contained in your letters to his Holiness, who was glad to receive it, and thanks your Lordships; he wishes me to make known to him whatever news I may receive from Florence, as he has much faith in whatever your Lordships write.

I have heard the agreement between Gonsalvo and the king much discussed, and every one wonders that Gonsalvo has faith in it; and the more liberal the king shows himself towards him, the more every one suspects the agreement, thinking that the king does it only for the purpose of reassuring Gonsalvo, so that under the guise of this security he may be the better able to dispose of him. Many other reasons are alleged which I do not mention, as the whole subject has no great interest for your Lordships, and because matters of this sort are difficult to be judged of, as are all other things that depend upon the arbitrary will and pleasure of men.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus
Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secretary.

Urbino, 28 September, 1506.

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LETTER XXIV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I have already written to your Lordships this morning, and sent my letter by the sculptor Sansovino, who was returning post haste to Florence. Since then the Pope had me called to him, and said to me, in presence of his Eminence of Volterra, that the only object he had in leaving Rome and subjecting himself to so many discomforts was to deliver the cities of the Church from their tyrants, and to render them secure against external as well as internal foes. That it was for no other reason that he had stopped at Perugia, and on his departure from there had made Gianpaolo leave also, and had taken him with him; and therefore he was most desirous that others should not disturb the peace and quiet which he had established. He was greatly displeased, consequently, to learn that Niccolo Savello, being on the confines of Perugia, indulged in conduct that caused apprehensions to the citizens of that town, lest at the instigation of Carlo Baglioni, or others of that stamp, he should commit some outrage upon them. His Holiness therefore entreated your Lordships, in the name of that affection which you had always manifested towards the Church and himself personally, to take such measures as would prevent any subject of the Church from being molested either by any of your people, or at the instigation of any one. I replied to his Holiness in a becoming manner, assuring him that it was unnecessary to write to you, yet to satisfy him I would do so.

His Holiness added, furthermore, that inasmuch as his nephew, the Prefect, was to succeed to the state of Urbino, he regarded that state as already his, although the Duke was still in possession; and therefore he felt constrained to ask your Lordships to modify certain duties upon merchandise, and more especially those upon leather, as these duties were most prejudicial to that state. True, the Duke might by way of reprisal increase the duties upon all merchandise passing through his state; but that he did not wish to do so without first advising your Lordships of it, as he had done on former occasions, although it had resulted in nothing but fair words. And although the respect due to that state, and the merits of him who was lord of the same, ought of themselves to have influenced your Lordships, nevertheless his Holiness desired to add his request that you would lay him under a fresh obligation, as it was his particular wish that the Prefect should always continue to live in harmony and in good relations with your Lordships. I pray your Lordships to reply upon these two points in such manner as in your wisdom you may judge best.

For the purpose of more promptly solving the question with France, the Pope has this day sent his chamberlain Messer Menchier to Milan. And by way of doing honor to the king of Spain he has sent Messer Gabriello Merino to Rome, with orders to go on board of one of the galleys at Ostia, and go out to sea as far as possible to meet the king. His Holiness leaves to-morrow morning for Cesena, as mentioned in my letter of this morning.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

URBINO, 28 September, 1506. *Secretary.*

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LETTER XXV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

On the 28th, I wrote two letters to your Lordships from Urbino, the last of which you will find enclosed herewith. On the following day the Pope left here according to previous arrangements, and went to Macerata, whilst myself with seven eighths of the court went to San Marino, and leaving there yesterday morning I arrived last night, at the twenty-second hour, at Cesena. The Pope lodged last night at San Marino, and will stay to-night at Santo Arcangiolo, and to-morrow evening he will make his entry here.

Yesterday evening I found the six Bolognese ambassadors here, who are going again to the Pope, and are eagerly looked for by the court. They left here to meet the Pope, and lodged last night at Santo Arcangiolo, where the Pope is to arrive to-day, and where they will find the old Bolognese ambassadors and Messer Giovanni's secretary, who were to await them there. These ambassadors had scarcely alighted from their horses and gone to their lodgings when a mounted messenger came to them from Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, who informed them that the father of Messer Giovanni Gonzadini, a Bolognese and Datary to the Pope, had been assassinated by some of his particular enemies ; and that he had been sent to inform them of this occurrence, so that, on account of the son and the rank which he holds in the Pope's service, they might promptly look to their safety. So soon, therefore, as the old ambassadors and the new ones heard this news, they hastily remounted, and, leaving all their effects behind, went off, taking the road to Rimini. When their flight became known, they were pursued by the men of Santo Arcangiolo, and three of them were captured, namely, the two old ambassadors and one of the new, but the other five escaped and are now at Rimini. The three that were taken are confined in the castle of Santo Arcangiolo, and the effects of all of them have been sequestered. It is said that the Pope has sent to recall these ambassadors, assuring them of their safety, that is to say those who are at Rimini ; but the three who are shut up in the castle have not been set free, nor have their effects been released. So bad a beginning is likely to give rise to other similar troubles.

On the 28th there arrived at Urbino a certain Messer Agostino Semenza,* a native of Cremona, and brother of that Paolo Semenza who was formerly secretary of the Duke of Milan whilst at Florence. It is said that this individual is secretary to the Emperor, and that he has now been sent by him to the Pope, and that he has many letters of credence for some of the cardinals and others. He reports the coming of the Emperor as positively certain. I do not know any particulars of what he says, not having as yet conversed with him; but I will endeavor to have a talk with him, and will then inform your Lordships of what I learn from him. I understand that he says that the Emperor sends two ambassadors to the Pope, namely, the Cardinal of Brixen,* and Casimir, Marquis of Brandenburg, who have no other commission than to announce the Emperor's coming, and have nothing to ask of the Pope. Nor have I anything else to write to your Lordships except to recommend myself to you, *quæ felices valeant.*

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* Respecting this Messer Agostino, the Annals of Cremona, by L. Cavitelli, may be consulted. He is there spoken of as "Augustinus Somentius," etc.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

CESENA, 1 October, 1506. *Secret. apud Papam.*

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LETTER XXVI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 1st instant, and sent the letter by way of Castrocaro, enclosing at the same time one of the 28th ultimo. Yesterday evening I received your Lordships' letter also of the 1st, in which you mention one of the 29th ultimo, but which has never been received. Yours of the 1st instant communicates the resolution taken by France in relation to the troops claimed by the Pope, and which the king cheerfully places at his service. This news had already been received here, and has encouraged the Pope to that degree that he looks upon Bologna as already conquered, and begins to think of other and vaster enterprises. It is said that this resolution of France is drawn up in terms most honorable for the Pope; and that the king has publicly discouraged both the Bolognese and the Venetian ambassadors, who supplicated him in favor of Bologna. I refrain from writing any particulars of this to your Lordships, for if true your ambassador will have informed you of it, and if false it is not necessary to write about it.

In my last I mentioned the murder in Bologna of the father of the Pope's Datary, and the disturbances to which this event has given rise here, and that the Bolognese ambassadors had fled from Santo Arcangiolo to Rimini, and that the Pope had sent to call them back, promising them perfect security. And so it turned out, for the said ambassadors returned here yesterday before the Pope had made his entry. So soon as he had reached his lodgings they were admitted, but they merely kissed his feet without saying a word. This morning they presented themselves again before his Holiness, and in a lengthy address expressed the respect and devotion of the people of Bologna to the Church, referring to the treaties made with several of the Popes, and which had been confirmed by the present one. They concluded by explaining the political conduct of their city and asseverating their religious devotion to the laws.

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* This was Melchior Cops, or Copis, a German who, being Bishop of Brixen, or Bressanone, was made Cardinal by Alexander VI. in the year 1503. Having been sent to Rome as ambassador of the Emperor Maximilian, he died there in the month of May, 1509, and was buried in the church of Ara Cœli.

His Holiness replied, that, if the people of Bologna were devoted to the Church, it was no more than their duty, for they were under obligations to the Church, which was as good a mistress to them as they were good servants to her; that he had come in person to liberate the city from her tyrants; and that as to the treaties he cared neither for those made by other Popes, nor for that made by himself, for neither his predecessors nor himself could have done otherwise, and that it was necessity and not his free will that had made him confirm the treaty; but that the time had now arrived for correcting these things, and it seemed to him that if he did not do so he would have no excuse to offer to the Almighty; and that it was for that reason that he had started from Rome, his object being to make Bologna govern herself properly, and for that reason he intended to come there in person; and if her government pleased him he would confirm it, and if not then he would change it; and to be able to do so by force of arms, in case all other modes did not suffice, he had provided himself with an army that would make all Italy tremble, let alone Bologna.

The ambassadors remained confounded, and after a few words of reply they took their leave. To-morrow there will be another review here of the men-at-arms, who are quartered in the vicinity of Santo Arcangiolo. I think orders have been given for the raising of infantry, and, according to what I hear, the Pope will go on Tuesday next to Furli, where his presence is much desired; for it is understood that that place, notwithstanding the proximity of the Pope, is constantly under arms, of which your Lordships can be more particularly informed by Pier Francesco Tosinghi.*

Since the Pontiff has been informed of the resolution of France, he has brought forward again the question of Marc Antonio and the hundred men-at-arms, which he asks of your Lordships. He has said repeatedly that he had not claimed them before, because he wished to satisfy your Lordships, who had importuned him to defer this demand as long as possible, and also for some other good reasons. But that he now desires most earnestly that these men-at-arms should be held in readiness to march promptly whenever he should require it. I for my part expect every moment that the Pope will have me called, and will charge me to write to your Lordships to start these troops. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

CESENA, 3 October, 1506.

P. S. — Magnificent Signori, — It is now some days since I find myself greatly in want of money. I have not asked for any before now, because I counted every day upon returning to Florence; but seeing that this is delayed, I implore your Lordships for charity's sake to supply me with means, and recommend myself anew.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. Flor. apud Papam.

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LETTER XXVII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote yesterday to your Lordships, and sent the letter by the Commissary of the Romagna; nothing new has occurred since then, and I should not have written but for the opportunity which offered for sending it.

It is still believed that the Pope will leave on Tuesday for

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* This Tosinghi was Commissary-General in Castrocaro in 1506; and it was through him that Machiavelli generally sent his letters to Florence, and *vice versa* the Florentine government sent their letters through him to Machiavelli.

Furli, notwithstanding that all who follow the court are displeased on account of the difficulty of finding suitable lodgings as compared with those here. Several of the cardinals have gone to the Pope to induce him to change his purpose; namely, to remain here in person with the whole court, and to send the remainder of his troops forward, so as to distribute the whole army between Furli and Imola. They did not succeed, however, for the Pope seems to think that it would detract from the lustre of this enterprise if he were to stop so far away from the main object. To-morrow his Holiness will hold a consistory, after which some definite resolution will probably be taken with regard to the way in which this enterprise is to be carried on. Whatever I may learn on the subject shall immediately be communicated to your Lordships.

The review of the men-at-arms did not take place to-day, as I had written in my letter of yesterday. It is now said that it will be held to-morrow. Gianpaolo Baglioni arrived here to-day, and the Duke of Urbino is expected to-morrow. The Marquis of Mantua is here as usual, and accompanies the Pope on all his journeys.

Ramazotto has sent a messenger to inform his Holiness that he has completed the raising of the infantry, and calls for the rest of the pay. There are no indications of their raising any other infantry, and some captains who have come here in the hope of being employed begin to despair. It is doubted, in fact, whether the Pope may not content himself with the two thousand Italians, counting, on the other hand, upon the three thousand Swiss whom the French want to have with them. I understand that he has sent thirty thousand ducats to Milan for three months' pay of these Swiss, which they are in the habit of requiring before they march, as is well known to your Lordships.

The Legate of Perugia continues to write to the Pope that the state of things in that place is constantly improving, and that the mass of the people are thoroughly content, and cannot thank God and his Holiness enough for having taken the trouble to save them from slavery; and that they pray to God every day for the welfare of his Holiness. He writes also that he has caused the Magistracy of the Ten to resign their office, and has not allowed others to be elected, and that he has in this way abolished a magistracy that always sustained the tyranny; and that it has cost him a great deal of trouble to carry this matter through, but that having done so had given him great reputation; so that according to him the Church pushes every day a fresh root into that city, whilst those of her opponents are daily drying up.

These are matters which we must leave to time to develop and confirm. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ felices valeant.*

Servus
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. apud Papam.

CESENA, 4 October, 1506.

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LETTER XXVIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and amongst other things mentioned that the Pope was to leave here to-morrow for Furli; from what I learn to-day, however, it seems that he will not do so, but will postpone his departure until the day after. His object in staying over is to adjust matters here a little better, and to restore tranquillity amongst these people of Cesena. But if to establish peace here is difficult, to maintain it is still more so; for these people have indulged in murder, robbery, arson, and every other act of violence and hostility against one another. Yet the Pope has patched up matters between them, and it is supposed that, if he is successful in this enterprise against Bologna, he may afterwards consolidate this peace here if he is so inclined.

The review of the men-at-arms has been held; there were six hundred men, counting two light-horse for each man-at-arms. The one thousand infantry of the Duke of Urbino were also reviewed; also sixteen hundred other infantry, which the Pope had employed Nanni Morattini of Furli * to raise, and in addition to these three hundred Swiss of the Pope's guard. The troops raised by Ramazotto have not yet made their appearance; but he came here in person, and stated that he had organized four thousand in case the Pope should want them.

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* This Nanni Morattini was Captain-General of Antonio Ordelaffi of Furli. See History of the Marquis of Furli.

He bestows great praise upon your Lordships for having permitted him to engage even some of those that had been enrolled for your service. I cannot refrain from telling your Lordships that, if you were to see the troops of the Duke of Urbino and those of Morattini, your Lordships would not feel ashamed of your own troops, nor esteem them lightly.

This morning the Pope held a consistory, and the only thing discussed was the resolve to employ ecclesiastical censure against Bologna in addition to the force of arms that has been prepared. It seems to me that Messer Giovanni Bentivogli is beginning to give way somewhat, and to come down a little from the high ground which he has assumed till now.

It is understood that the French are coming by day's marches, and that Chaumont is coming with them, and that their force consists of six hundred lances, three thousand infantry, and twenty-four pieces of artillery.

This morning after the review the Marquis of Mantua and the Duke of Urbino remained closeted with the Pope for over three hours. It is supposed that the subject under discussion was this enterprise, but no particulars are known; I learn, however, from a person who has conversed with the Marquis, that he makes a thousand difficulties.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Consul. apud Papam.

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LETTER XXIX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and *inter cætera* stated that the departure of the Pope from here had been fixed for to-morrow. It seems, however, that he has again changed his mind; and there will be a consistory to-morrow, at which the only question to be examined is the manner in which the ecclesiastical censure is to be launched against the Bolognese.

At this moment, it being about the twenty-second hour, the ambassador of the king of Castile has notified the Pope that his Majesty has died, at Burgos, of a malady called in Italy the "Mazzucco";* and as this death may cause the return of King Ferdinand to Spain, or some other movement, I write to your Lordships in all haste by way of Castrocaro, fearing that your Lordships will not get this news so promptly in any other way. The Pope has to-day engaged Ramazotto with six hundred infantry, and Nanni Morattini with three hundred men, and has taken measures to have some five to six thousand at his option, of which the one thousand men from Feltro constitute a part, as I have before mentioned to your Lordships. The French will bring with them four to five thousand men.

The Bolognese have opened negotiations, and ask that two cardinals be sent there to see and make reforms; but his Holiness persists in his resolution to march upon Bologna. It is said now that he will start to-morrow after dinner, which seems to me difficult; but we shall certainly start the day after for Furli. *Valete.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. apud Papam.

CESENA, 6 October, 1506.

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* This event was announced to Machiavelli by Cardinal Soderini, in a letter still extant, and dated at Cesena, 6 October, in precisely the same terms which Machiavelli uses, in writing to the Florentine Signoria, about the nature of the malady of which the Archduke Philip died. Muratori in the Annals of Italy in 1528, speaks of the "Mazzucco" as a pestilential fever which attacks the inhabitants of Padua, rendering them mad and desirous to throw themselves out of the window, or into wells and rivers, and for which medical men have found no remedy as yet. He reports also that in the same year the imperial army was attacked by this epidemic, which caused much suffering and great mortality amongst the troops. It recurred in the years 1414, 1510, 1558, and 1580, in which last year Anne of Austria, wife of King Philip II., died of it. The historian Mariana, Vol. II. p. 225, in speaking of the death of the Archduke Philip, expresses himself as follows: "The King Don Philip was seized with a pestilential fever "that carried him off in a few days. Some persons suspected that he had been "poisoned, but his own physicians, amongst whom was Louis Marliano, a Milanese, "who afterwards became Bishop of Tuy, proved that the real cause of his illness "had been too violent exercise." He adds, that he died on the 25th of September, 1506, at ten o'clock, P. M., at the age of twenty-eight years. In fine, this sickness is a species of catarrh, generally accompanied by high fever, and always with great pain and heaviness in the head, giddiness, etc., etc., also running at the nose, which afterwards goes down into the throat and chest, causing incessant hard coughing and difficulty of respiration, nausea, weakness, and a painful feeling of lassitude of the whole body. This malady is always epidemic, and has several times infected all Europe, passing with great rapidity from province to province. In Italy it has been called, according to the locality, Galantino or Cortesina sickness, or the Mazzucco, or the Mattone or Montone sickness. In France it is called *Coqueluche.* These notes have been furnished by the celebrated Doctor Giovanni Torgione Tozelli.

LETTER XXX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 6th, informing you amongst other things of the death of the king of Castile, which event is here construed favorably to the plans of the Pope. For it is believed that the king of France, on whom the Pope mainly relies, will be more at liberty to favor the Church and to protect Italy against those who would devour her. All that is needed now is that the Almighty should allow both of them to live, and then matters might very soon assume a different color. May the Almighty shape things for the best!

At the last consistory, which was held at Cesena on the 7th instant, it was resolved that the Interdict should be launched against that city and its government. Since then the Pope has come here and made a solemn entrance into this place. And if in the beginning his Holiness was hot for this enterprise, he is now all on fire for it, and has sent the Bishop of Concordia* to Rome, accompanied by another prelate, to fetch a large sum of money from there, as the Pope is not willing to trust to letters of exchange. All the men-at-arms have gone from here to Imola, where they will await the Pope, who it is believed will leave here on Monday, or at furthest on Tuesday.

The French are reported to be advancing, and are supposed to have reached the territory of Modane; but we do not hear that the Bolognese have taken any further steps than what I stated in my last. Two days ago the people of Castel Bolognese, a place belonging to Bologna, and lying between Faenza and Imola, sent ambassadors to the Pope, and offered to place themselves in his hands. The Pope's men-at-arms were quartered there on their march to Imola.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

FURLI, 9 October, 1506. *Secret.*

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* This was Francesco Argentino of Venice, who was made Bishop of Concordia in 1494, being the successor of Niccolo Donati. Julius II. made him Cardinal in the month of March, 1511, and in August of the same year he died at Rome, and was buried in the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere.

LETTER XXXI.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and amongst other matters gave you notice of the Pope's arrival here. This morning a consistory was held, and in presence of the assembled college the draft of a treaty was read which had been prepared by the Bolognese ambassadors, one of the clauses of which stipulated that, in case the Pope should want to come in person to Bologna, he should not be allowed to enter the city accompanied by more than his ordinary guard of infantry, that is to say, from two hundred and fifty to three hundred Swiss; and that he should give notice beforehand of the length of time he intended to remain in the city. There were other similar provisions that were far from being honorable for the Pope, and which excited the indignation of the entire college, who immediately ordered a Bull to be prepared against Messer Giovanni and his adherents, much more stringent than the one which had been passed by the previous consistory at Cesena on the 7th. This new Bull declares Messer Giovanni and his adherents rebels against the Holy Church; all their goods and possessions are given to whoever chooses to take them; the men are abandoned as prisoners to whoever captures them, and plenary indulgence is accorded to whoever injures or kills them.

After this had been concluded and resolved, the Pope sent for a certain Messer Jacopo, secretary of Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, and who had, ever since I have been with the Pope, been constantly at court with the old Bolognese ambassador, and in the presence of the assembled college the Pope told him that his bad conduct during his mission had merited serious punishment; for he had done all in his power to encourage Messer Giovanni and the people of Bologna in their obstinate and refractory conduct towards the Holy Church. And that, were it not that he wanted to be consistent with his character, and did not want to violate the privileges of a public man, he would make him an object of pity to all the world. But to be consistent with his habitual character he would merely order him immediately to quit the states of the Church, and be careful never to fall into his hands again. The secretary asked permission to reply and justify himself, but was not allowed; whereupon he speedily left for Bologna.

After the consistory to-day the Pope wanted to go from the palace of the Priors, where he is lodged, to dine at the castle, and in coming out of his chamber followed by all the cardinals he found the hall full of people, and amongst them the Bolognese ambassadors. He immediately went up to them and blamed them for the tyranny of Messer Giovanni and their own, and for their not being ashamed to have come here to defend it, and said all this with great animosity and bitterness.

At the consistory this morning, the Marquis of Mantua was appointed Lieutenant of the Holy Church in this enterprise against Bologna. Cardinal Este lodged last night at Luco, and will thence come here with a numerous suite to do homage to the Pope. The Duke of Ferrara, according to what I hear from some of his own people, will visit his Holiness at Imola. The impression still prevails that the Pope will leave here on Monday next for Imola; but as he does not wish to pass through Faenza, it is not known whether he will take the road to the right towards the sea, or that to the left towards the hills.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

FURLI, 10 October, 1506.

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LETTER XXXII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My letter of the 10th informed your Lordships of what was passing here. This morning after the signing of the documents the Pope had me called to him and said: "I believe that your "Signoria, seeing the progress I have made in this enterprise "against Messer Giovanni Bentivogli, must wonder that, having "so long ago asked them for Messer Marc Antonio and his "men-at-arms, which they had offered me in the manner you "know, I have not ere this required them to send them to me. "Know then, and you may write this to your Signoria, that I "have delayed to make the demand because I wished to satisfy "*ad plenum* their desire as made known to me by you on their "behalf, and did not want to make the demand until your Sig-"noria should know, and be able to see, the certainty of my "success in this enterprise, and that the assistance which I had "counted upon was quite sure. For the French are on the way "here, as many as I had asked for and even more, and I have "satisfied their demands for money and for everything else. Besides my own four hundred men-at-arms I have those of Gianpaolo to the extent of one hundred and fifty men-at-arms, and "the one hundred Stradiotes which I told you I was expecting "from the kingdom of Naples, and which you must have seen. "The Marquis of Mantua has joined me with one hundred light-horse, and has given orders for one hundred more. You will "see the Duke of Ferrara join me at Imola with more than one "hundred men-at-arms, and all his other troops are likewise at "my command. I have paid the money for the infantry that is "coming with the French, and for that which has been raised "here for my account; and finally, so that every one may know "that I will make no terms with Messer Giovanni, I have, as it "were, published a crusade against him. Now if your Signoria "do not wish to be the last, as they have promised me, they will "have to hasten their troops forward; and for that reason I desire you to send at once an express to signify to them on my "behalf my wish that they will be pleased to send the Signor "Marc Antonio Colonna toward Imola with the one hundred "men-at-arms which he commands. And say to your Signoria, "that, although they can themselves see that I am able to do "without those troops, yet I desire them, not for the value of "their services nor for the honor which it would be for me, "but for the sake of having just grounds for benefiting your "Signoria, and to favor them in whatever they may desire "most, when the occasion shall occur, which will always be "so long as the Church shall enjoy that high reputation and "credit to which I hope to elevate her."

I replied to his Holiness, that I would immediately communicate his wishes to your Lordships; and when he asked me how long it would take these troops to reach Imola, I said that my messenger could not reach Florence in less than two days, that it would require two days more to transmit the orders to Cascina, and that then the troops would need at least seven days to march from Cascina to Imola. This seemed to him too long, and he solicited me again to write at once and to let him know immediately when I received a reply.

Cardinal Este arrived here yesterday evening, and the Duke is momentarily expected at Imola, as the Pope had told me. The Marquis is marching with all the troops towards Imola, and the Pope will start in that direction to-morrow or the day following. Yesterday a brief was expedited from the consistory in virtue of which the Pope concedes to the king of France the right to dispose of all the benefices of the duchy of Milan, the same as the Count Francesco had enjoyed; this is the last request which the king of France has made of the Pope in connection with this affair. It is said that the Bolognese have abandoned Castel San Piero, but purpose defending the two smaller castles nearer to the city.

Since Messer Jacopo, the Chancellor of Messer Giovanni, has been dismissed by the Pope in full consistory, as I have already written, the ambassadors have notified his Holiness that they have been recalled, and asked for leave to go; to which the Holy Father replied, that he neither gave nor withheld that leave to them, but that he advised them to be careful not to go to Bologna, as they would be cut to pieces there because of the sad accounts which Messer Jacopo, the Chancellor of Messer Giovanni, had given of them. The ambassadors understood this to mean that they are not to leave, and so they have remained; and the Pope has commissioned Bishop Pazzi, who is governor of this place, to watch them carefully and not to let them go.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Furli, 12 October, 1506. *Secret.*

LETTER XXXIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and informed you of all that the Pope had charged me to say to you in relation to the men-at-arms which he desires your Lordships to send him, according to his first demand. Having disposed of all other business, he now wants to bring yours forward. Since then I have received your Lordships' letter of the 11th, but must inform you that I have not received the package of letters for

France, which you tell me you have sent; I am not able, therefore, either to forward them to France, or return them to your Lordships, as you charge me to do. Your Lordships furthermore desire to know whereabouts the French troops are at present, as you have no news of them. It is said here that more than two thirds of them are at Parma, and that the remainder are coming with Chaumont, who was waiting to start until he should have received the brief of which I made mention in my last letter to your Lordships.

Yesterday evening news came here from the army that the Marquis had taken Castel San Piero and disarmed fifty light-horse of Messer Giovanni. We can hear nothing of what is going on in Bologna, as we get no more news from there since the opening of hostilities. At first it was said that Messer Giovanni was lukewarm in his preparations, and did not spend what was necessary to defend himself against an attack of this nature. The Pope did not leave here this morning, as he had intended, owing to a touch of gout in one of his knees, which kept him in bed all the forenoon; but this is an old trouble, and not at all dangerous. They say that there will be a consistory held to-morrow morning, and that his Holiness will remain here to-morrow on account of the party feuds here, after which he will go to Imola.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

FURLI, 13 October, 1506.

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LETTER XXXIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, giving an account of the events of the day. This morning a consistory was held at which the Pope communicated to the Cardinals that Castel San Piero and Castel Guelfo had been taken, and forty of the enemy's light-horse disarmed and stripped. He stated that, although Messer Giovanni had made demonstrations of intending to maintain himself in this direction in Butriano, and in the opposite direction in Castel Franco, yet he believed that so soon as his troops should show themselves before these places neither the one nor the other would make any serious resistance. The Pope furthermore stated that he had received a verbal message, through a man who had come from Bologna, that Messer Giovanni had disbanded all his foreign infantry, and was resolved to defend himself exclusively with his own people. This seems difficult to believe, as we do not know what reason he could have for this; and perhaps it is not true. As to the departure of the Pope from here, he says that he will remain here to-day and to-morrow, and that then he will take counsel upon the question; so that it is believed that he will not go from here unless he hears that the French are nearer to Bologna, and upon this point nothing is known but what I have already written you.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

FURLI, 14 October, 1506.

Whilst writing I receive your Lordships' letter of the 12th, and with it the package for France, which I will make it a point to forward or return to you.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

P. S. — I have heard to-night that letters have been received from Monseigneur d'Aix, dated 11th instant, in which he informs the Pope that Chaumont is willing to send five hundred lances to Parma, with orders not to leave there without fresh instructions. I have not yet verified this report, but shall endeavor in my next to give you further particulars.

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LETTER XXXV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

After a long consultation as to what route he should take to go from Furli to Imola without laying himself under obligations to the Venetians, and seeing that by going to the right towards the sea he would be shut in between the rivers and Faenza, and if he went to the left towards the mountains he would be wedged in between Berzighella and Faenza, either of which routes seemed to him insecure, his Holiness the Pope has decided to take neither of these two, but to go more towards the mountains, and keep altogether upon Florentine territory. Thus he would dine to-morrow at Castrocaro, and pass the night at Modigliana, the next day through Marradi and Palazzuolo, the day following to Tosignano, a castle belonging to the Church, and then the next day to Imola.

Just as this decision had been taken I received your Lordships' letters of the 14th, informing me of the order given to Signor Marc Antonio to march. I hastened to read the letter to the Pope, who, so soon as he had heard it, called in the most joyful manner the Datary and Messer Carlo degli Ingrati, saying: "I want you to hear now what friends Messer Giovanni "has, and which of us is most beloved by his neighbors, the "Holy Church or he." In addition to these two he called all who were near and who were still at table, and wanted them also to hear the letter; and then he spoke in the most honorable and affectionate manner of your Lordships. Thereupon I said to his Holiness, that, as he had decided to take the route through the Florentine dominions, I would immediately mount and see to making such preparations for his reception as were possible in the poor places where he would have to stop, and where suitable accommodations were very scarce; and that he must look upon it as though he were in camp, or in even worse places. I expressed my regret that this matter had not been known some five or six days sooner, so that your Lordships could have taken proper measures to do him honor, but that he would not lack evidences of the most affectionate devotion, which all the places within your Lordships' dominions would show him; for they all knew that such was your Lordships' will and pleasure. His Holiness replied that he had no apprehensions whatever upon that score, and that he would in any event be entirely satisfied; and thereupon I took my leave. It is now the twentieth hour, and I am here in Castrocaro, and shall be to-morrow evening at Modigliana, *ut parem viam Domino.*

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. apud Papam.

CASTROCARO, 16 October, 1506.

LETTER XXXVI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

Since informing your Lordships of the Pope's determination to go to Imola through your Lordships' dominions, he has followed the precise route which I had indicated. To-day is the 19th of the month, and at the fifteenth hour we arrived here at Palazzuolo, where we shall dine and go on this evening to Tosignano, a place belonging to the Church. Yesterday at Marradi your messenger arrived from Mugello with six barrels of wine in casks and two in bottles, and a load of pears; he presented them to the Pope in a very proper manner, suitable to the nature of the present. His Holiness accepted it all very graciously, and expressed his thanks.

This morning Pier Francesco Tosinghi, Commissary-General, concluded not to accompany the Pope any farther, and accordingly took his leave of his Holiness. I cannot tell your Lordships with how much kindness the Pope spoke to him, and with what demonstrations of affection for your Lordships, and how he held him in his embrace for half an hour in presence of the whole court. I shall not report to your Lordships the particular words of his Holiness, for I am sure Pier Francesco will have written it all to you at length.

Everybody here is of the opinion that, if the Pope succeeds in his attempt upon Bologna, he will lose no time in engaging in more important enterprises, and it is thought that now or never will Italy be relieved of those who have plotted to devour her.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PALAZZUOLO, 19 October, 1506. *Secret.*

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LETTER XXXVII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

My last to your Lordships was from Palazzuolo. Yesterday the Pope arrived here, and, as already mentioned in a previous letter, he was entirely satisfied with his journey across your

Lordships' dominions; in truth, I had sent everywhere ample supplies of bread and wine and meats of every description, as well as forage for the horses. Upon his arrival here there came to him a person just from the French camp, who reported that they must by this time be at Modena; and that the force consisted of eight hundred and ten lances, five thousand infantry, two thousand Swiss, and the rest are Gascons and other detached troops. It is said that Messer Giovanni has asked for terms through the intervention of Chaumont, and that the Marquis of Mantua favors it; the latter came this morning from the camp, and was for a considerable space of time in private conference with the Pope. When his Holiness afterwards came out of his chamber, he said to about twenty cardinals who were waiting for him, that Messer Giovanni had proposed an arrangement with much more reasonable conditions than what he had offered at Furli; that, however, the only terms upon which he would treat with him were, either that he should leave Bologna with his movables, and that his immovables should be preserved for him, or that he should come and place himself unconditionally in his hands, and that he would not treat with him upon any other terms.

Those with whom I have talked upon these matters believe that, whenever Messer Giovanni shall come to despair of being able to defend himself by force, he will throw himself with his children into the arms of the Pope, under the guaranty of Chaumont or some other great personage, hoping that, after the example of Gianpaolo Baglioni, he may be able personally to effect some arrangement that would permit him to remain in Bologna, and thus not lose the chance of resuming at the first opportunity his original position.

Whilst at the palace this morning and conversing with the Bolognese ambassadors, who are still here, they complained with moderation of your Lordships having sent troops here; to which I answered, laughingly as it were, that Messer Giovanni and your other neighbors had taught you, at your own expense, to follow the general; and that therefore it was not of your conduct that they ought to complain, but of that which you had learned from them.

This morning, when Bernardo da Bibbieno asked Messer Carlo Ingrati how matters were going on, the latter replied, "Very well, in spite of those who wish the contrary." Whereupon Bernardo said, "Am I one of those that wish that matters should not go on well?" To which Messer Carlo, with an embarrassed expression of countenance, replied, "I know nothing about it"; and then turned his back upon him.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

IMOLA, 21 October, 1506. *Secret.*

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LETTER XXXVIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Yesterday I reported to your Lordships the events of the day. This morning we learn that the French will be in the course of to-morrow in the neighborhood of Castel Franco, on Bolognese territory; and to-morrow also Monseigneur d'Allegri is expected here, who comes to confer with his Holiness and the commanders of the Italian troops as to the manner in which this enterprise is to be carried on. In speaking this morning of the coming of Monseigneur d'Allegri, his Holiness manifested a desire that on his arrival there should also be an ambassador here from your Lordships; for as matters relating to the welfare of Italy are to be discussed, his Holiness wishes that Florence should be represented on the occasion. It would be well, therefore, if Messer Francesco * were to start from Florence to-day, as has been spoken of.

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* Messer Francesco Pepi was the ambassador that was sent to the Pope. One of his autograph letters, dated 25 October, 1506, informs us of his departure from Florence and his arrival at Firenzuola, and of his intention to proceed immediately to Imola on his mission to the Pope. The following is the letter: —

VERY DEAR NICCOLO: —

I received your letter yesterday whilst I was still on the other side of the Giogo; for although I left Florence on Thursday, I have been delayed by an unfortunate accident that happened to me on the road, and prevented my being with you yesterday evening, as I had intended. I am now about to start from Firenzuola, and send this to you by my courier. I beg you will recommend me to his Eminence the Cardinal Volterra, and make my excuses to him for not answering his letter, thank him most warmly for his letter and the information it contains, and assure him that it is only the absolute want of time that prevents my writing to him; please read this letter to his Eminence.

I wish to avoid all pomp and ceremony on my arrival, if the locality will serve as an excuse for it, and if it comports with the dignity of our republic; for I

The troops of the Pope here scoured the country yesterday almost up to the very walls of Bologna, and captured some cattle. They came, however, very near being surprised by some of the Bolognese cavalry, who issued from the city to pursue them, but did not come far enough to overtake the Pope's troops. It is said that Messer Giovanni has sacked several monasteries which had commenced to obey the bull of excommunication.

The quarters for the Duke of Ferrara are ready, and a quantity of his baggage has arrived, and it is said that he will be here himself very shortly. The Venetian ambassador, who has followed the court as far as Cesena, has stopped there, and has not yet been seen either here or at Furli.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

IMOLA, 22 October, 1506. *Secret.*

should rejoice more at one good service rendered to our most illustrious Signoria than at a thousand demonstrations. And I believe that it would suffice if it were publicly understood at Florence that the omission of ceremonies was at my own particular request. I am entirely ready, however, to accommodate myself altogether to whatever his Eminence may deem proper, for *in minimis et in maximis,* I desire to conform to his judgment and advice, for it was with that determination that I started from Florence.

If it be not deemed improper that I should enter the city this evening alone and accompanied by only one servant, I will do so; and I would mount at once, leaving all my other servants behind, unless it be deemed better that I should stay over at Tosignano with all my servants, for if I were to arrive alone it might be regarded as though I were not there. I have with me eight mounted servants, my son and my son-in-law, a steward Ser Agostino, and two grooms and my courier, all in good order and well mounted. I have also four other cavaliers with me, one of whom is of the family of the Peruzzi and one of the Venturi, who have some business here at court. We started together, and they have kept me company all the way, and intend to lodge in the same place with me. I mention all this to you so that you may know the extent of accommodation I require. After having written from Florence to his Eminence and to yourself, I learned that Messer Neroni is charged with the matter of lodgings, and so I wrote to him to procure me good lodgings, for there is some relationship between us. I shall dine to-day at Pian Caldoli, but send my courier all the way through, and beg you will send him back to me, as I shall remain at Tosignano until you inform me as to the order of proceeding which I shall have to follow, upon which point you will consult with his Eminence. Say to the Archdeacon that I do not reply to his letter, there being no occasion for it, as I shall do so in person. Recommend me to him, *et bene valete.*

FRANCESCO DE PEPI, *Doctor and Ambassador.*

FLORENCE, 25 October, 1506, 13th hour.

The letter is addressed on the back: —

"SPECTABILI VIRO NICC. DE MACLAVELLIS

"Mandatorio Flor. apud summum Pontificum, Imolæ."

LETTER XXXIX.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last to your Lordships was of the 22d; by the present I have to inform you that a courier named Quattrino arrived to-night from Lombardy, and reports the advance guard of the French to have left Modena, and that the remainder of the army under Monseigneur de Chaumont is at Parma. It is supposed that in the course of the week upon which we have just entered they will be in the vicinity of Bologna.

This evening the Pope's troops captured a Bolognese by the name of Carlo di Bianchi, son of one of the Magistracy of the Ten. This individual was going with despatches to certain small castles that have remained in the hands of the Bolognese. Your Lordships must know that the Italian troops in the service of the Pope are stationed at Castel San Piero and the neighboring villas, and that all these places surrendered as soon as the troops showed themselves before them. A very reliable person reported to me to-day that he had talked with a priest who had left Bologna two days before, and who had told him that Messer Giovanni had published the bull of excommunication, and has since then notified all the religious orders that they may either remain in Bologna or go away, as they please, and that many of them are going. This priest also reported that Messer Giovanni is throwing up bastions and earthworks, and is otherwise strengthening the weak points; and that he has ordered three thousand infantry to be levied, and that Tarlatino, Riniero della Sassetto, and Messer Piero Gambacorte were expected in Bologna. I give this information to your Lordships, not as well authenticated facts, but as things that are reported, and which may be true.

Monseigneur d'Allegri has not yet arrived, but is looked for to-morrow, as also the Duke of Ferrara. Recent letters from Venice state that, so soon as the news of the death of the Archduke became known in the Emperor's camp, his whole army disbanded, and that thus all his projects have ended in smoke.

Benedetto Pepi wrote me yesterday from Pietramala, under date of the 23d, that Signor Marc Antonio would be on the following day with his troops at Pian Caldoli, and wished me to let him know what was to be done. I communicated the information immediately to the Pope, who at once sent a commissary and one of his mace-bearers to Pian Caldoli to receive and conduct him to the camp of the other troops, where he ought to be this evening.

Messer Francesco Pepi writes me that he will be here to-morrow, and requests me to find lodgings for him, which has been very difficult; still, with the authority of the Pope and by putting others to inconvenience, I have succeeded in finding such as are convenient and reasonable; but it is now Sunday, and I have not yet heard further from him. I mention this to your Lordships, so that, in case he should not yet have left, you may urge him to hasten his departure, as an ambassador from Florence is greatly desired here, for the reasons which I have stated in a former letter to your Lordships.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. apud Papam.

IMOLA, 25 October, 1506.

LETTER XL.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

After having written the enclosed to your Lordships yesterday, the courier of his Magnificence the Ambassador arrived, and notified me that he would be this evening at Tosignano, and that, the locality serving as an excuse, he would wish all ceremonies and formalities on his arrival to be dispensed with, for being indisposed he desired to avoid that fatigue; and he requested me to inform him of what I had done in the matter.

I called at once upon his Eminence of Pavia, and informed him of the near arrival of our ambassador; his Eminence immediately sent for the master of ceremonies to arrange that all the cardinals with their suites and the other prelates should go out to meet the Ambassador according to custom. Whereupon I told his Eminence that, as the Ambassador was indisposed, he wished to avoid the fatigue of a ceremonious reception, provided the locality would excuse it. This request was promptly conceded, to the satisfaction of everybody, for the cardinals have but scanty retinues, and matters are done here in military fashion and not with all the formalities of Rome. His Magnificence the Ambassador has arrived here this morning, and his Holiness has appointed an audience for him for to-morrow at the fifteenth hour.

The news here is that the government of Bologna have written a letter to their ambassadors here, under date of yesterday, enclosing a copy of the summons which Monseigneur de Chaumont has addressed in the name of the king to that city; by which he informs them that if within two days they have not returned to their obedience to his Holiness, and submitted to all his commands, he will hold them as enemies, and will consider himself absolved from all obligations of protection under which he was to the state and person of Messer Giovanni and the city of Bologna. The government charge their ambassadors to throw themselves at the feet of his Holiness, and to recommend to him their city, and to inform him that they are ready to obey all his commands; and that they entreat him to spare the person and effects of Messer Giovanni and of his children. To which the Pope has replied that he has nothing to say to them except that they obey his Bull, to which sentence he adheres. We learn also, from a courier sent here express, that the French will be here to-day before Castel Franco.

His Magnificence the Ambassador, as I have said above, will have an audience of the Pope to-morrow, and will report to your Lordships from day to day the progress of events here; and, God willing, I shall, with the gracious permission of your Lordships, return to-morrow or next day to Florence.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

IMOLA, 26 October, 1506. *Secret. apud Papam.*

THIRD MISSION TO SIENNA.*

LETTER I.

MAGNIFICENT AND ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I arrived here this evening, and in trying to find out the whereabouts of the Legate, I learn from different sources that his Lordship will be this evening at Acquapendente, and will go to-morrow to Paglia ; the day after he may go to Buonconvento, and if he follows this itinerary he will be here on Friday ; but how long he may remain here is not known. Whether he will remain over Sunday to see the festivities here, or whether he will leave before, I shall have to find out after his arrival, when your Lordships shall be promptly informed. Now as to his retinue, and the honors which it is intended to show him here, I have talked with the landlords and others of that class with whom persons under similar circumstances are wont to lodge, and they report that the municipality has deputed six persons to receive and do honor to the Legate, and that the following arrangements have been made. The Legate himself, with forty or fifty of his more immediate suite, will be lodged either in the house of Pandolfo or in the episcopal palace, and their expenses honorably paid. The remainder of the retinue, with their horses, will lodge at the hostelries, and the landlords have already been notified to make the necessary provisions. It is not known yet whether the municipality will pay their expenses also, or whether they will be left to pay for themselves, as nothing has been said upon that point to the landlords; but seeing the importance they attach to this Legate, and their desire that he should also protect their interests in Germany, makes these landlords believe that the municipality will pay all. But they know nothing positive about it, nor do they know what is done in this respect in other parts of the dominion, and therefore I can write nothing about it. But I shall be in the same place with the Legate to-morrow, and when I shall have obtained full information upon all these points, I will send you an express. Neither am I able to inform you as to the number of mounted men in the Legate's retinue, for some say that it is not over one hundred, whilst others put it at two hundred; but the most trustworthy adhere to the smaller number. In short, as I have said above, within forty hours your Lordships shall know exactly the number, the manner in which they will be treated here, and the time when they will arrive on your territory. I shall not ask the Legate's master of the household for a list of his retinue, for I would not like to incur your Lordships' displeasure, if you should find yourselves embarrassed by their being in reality more than what the list might have indicated, and therefore I leave this question entirely to your Lordships.

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* When Pope Julius II. heard that the Emperor Maximilian was coming down into Italy to assume the imperial crown, he resolved to send a Legate to him in Germany, and appointed for this purpose the Spaniard Bernardino Caravajal, "Cardinal of Santa Croce in Jerusalemme." As this Legate had to traverse Tuscany in going to Germany, the Signoria of Florence, uncertain as to what they ought to do, and uninformed as to the number of persons in the Legate's suite, and at the same time not wishing either to go too far in showing him too much honor, or to fall short of doing their duty to so illustrious a stranger, resolved to send their Secretary to Sienna, where they knew that the Cardinal would stop a few days, so as to find out and report to them all they wished to know about him. Machiavelli's letters treat the matter according to his instructions ; but it seems that the Ten did not write to him during this mission, as no letters from them on the subject have been found in the archives. — Edition of Machiavelli's Works by Passerini and Milanesi.

There was a very excited meeting of the Balia here to-day owing to the news from Lusignano, that that borough had determined to keep its gates closed from fear of the men of Val di Chiana. From what I hear, the people of this city will make a great holiday of the Emperor's arrival, which is desired by all. I mention this to your Lordships, as in matters of this kind the will of the people generally differs from that of its chiefs. *Valete!*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

SIENNA, 10 August, 1507. *Secret.*

LETTER II.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

Immediately on my arrival here at Sienna, on the day before yesterday, I wrote to your Lordships all I had learned respecting the Legate, and how they had decided here to do him honor. Hoping that my letter reached you safely, I shall not repeat what I then wrote. As mentioned to your Lordships, the Legate lodged last night at Paglia, but instead of going there I went to San Quirico, thinking that I should see the Legate's retinue better when they arrive in the evening than when they start in the morning. I passed the night at San Quirico, where the Cardinal's retinue would have to pass if they were to go to Buonconvento according to the original intention, or in case they were to stop here. But the Cardinal had changed the order of things, going himself with a portion of his suite from Paglia to Pienza, where he was entertained by the Piccolomini, and sending the remainder on to San Quirico. As I wished to know exactly the number of cavaliers which the Legate has with him, and seeing this division arrive here, I sent my courier at daybreak to Pienza to count the number of cavaliers that had gone with the Legate, whilst I remained at San Quirico to count the rest. In fine, my courier returned and reported thirty-nine horse, and that he had remained there ten hours after the arrival of the Cardinal and suite. At San Quirico there arrived fifty-seven, and some ten had passed on towards Sienna, so that putting them all together there may be in all one hundred and ten cavaliers in his suite. I remained at San Quirico until the twenty-second hour to make sure that all had passed, and unless others should have come from Rome, he has no more than the above-stated number of one hundred and ten; although his chamberlains and master of the household say that he has one hundred and fifty, which they do, thinking the greater number more honorable. Besides the above-mentioned number of horse, there are thirty-two sumpter mules which I have counted myself, although the Cardinal's own people say there are forty; but so far from there being so many, the number is rather less, as I have said. He has about fifty grooms and valets, and as to his courtiers, the most of them look as if they had just come from the Stinche prisons.* These are all the facts I have been able to learn about the Cardinal's domestic establishment; and believing that I have fulfilled my mission in this respect, I took the post at the twenty-second hour, and came from San Quirico here to Sienna, so as to be able to inform your Lordships of the honors shown to the Cardinal, and of the time when he will leave here.

Finding himself still twenty-three miles from here, the Cardinal will not come to-morrow to Sienna, but defers his entry here until Saturday. The authorities have ordered him to be received with all the ceremony due to a Legate. He will be lodged at the episcopal palace, and all his gentlemen, to the number of about fifty, will be distributed amongst the citizens in such manner as the six deputies may deem best; whilst the whole crowd of menials will go to the hostelries, where their expenses will be paid; although nothing has as yet been said to the landlords upon this point, showing either that but a few will go to the hostelries, or that it will only be persons of low quality. Throughout the entire dominion the Cardinal has paid all expenses, except at Pienza, where he was the guest of the Piccolomini; but he paid the expenses of all who went to Paglia and San Quirico, and will do the same to-morrow, unless he should go with a select few to some private place, of which I am not aware. I shall remain all Sunday here at Sienna to witness their holiday-making. On Monday, or at the latest on Tuesday, the Cardinal goes to Poggibonsi; and if I knew exactly when he leaves here I should have returned and made my report to your Lordships in person; but as I have not been able to find out, I shall remain here until I can give you positive information on that point. And should anything else occur to your Lordships to charge me with, you can still do so. I can only report what I have already said, namely, that at the earliest on Monday, and at latest on Tuesday, the Cardinal will be at Poggibonsi.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

SIENNA, 12 August, 1507.

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* The prisons at Florence were familiarly called "Stinche," after a castle by that name in the Val di Greve in Tuscany, the inhabitants of which had rebelled. The Florentines surrounded this castle with a line of palisades, thus converting it into a prison in which all the inhabitants were shut up. By assimilation the new prisons in Florence were afterwards called the Stinche.

I have deferred sending off my express this morning, this being the 13th, to see whether I could forward it without expense; but unable to do so, I have now determined to send him. He will leave at the eleventh hour, and promises to be in Florence at the seventeenth hour.

Servus
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

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LETTER III.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 12th, and sent it yesterday morning in haste by an express. In that letter I informed you that the Legate would make his entry here to-day, and that throughout the Siennese dominions he had paid his own expenses, and that his retinue consisted of one hundred and ten cavaliers or less, and between thirty and forty sumpter mules, and about forty persons on foot; that he personally would lodge in the episcopal palace with forty or fifty of his cavaliers, and that the remainder would be accommodated in the different hostelries, and their expenses paid by the municipality; and that so far as I could learn he would leave here on Monday or Tuesday. Since then the Legate has arrived, and is lodged as I had written you; instead of paying his expenses, however, they have presented to him in the name of the Signoria all sorts of eatables, as is customary with ambassadors, but in such profusion that it is said they have cost more than one hundred ducats. Beyond this, however, they do not trouble themselves about them, but let them shift for themselves. The said Legate will leave here on Monday morning, and will go to Poggibonsi; on Tuesday he will proceed to San Casciano, and according to what he says himself he expects to reach Florence on Wednesday. Having heard from several persons that the Legate said this at table, I have no reason to doubt it; and as it seems to me now that I have nothing further to do here, I shall leave to-morrow morning, and shall come leisurely but direct to Florence. Should your Lordships think of any other commission to charge me with on the way, you can let me know.

Whilst here, and amongst these Spaniards, I have learned something which I think it would be well your Lordships should know also. It is this. About one month ago two letters were received here from the Emperor of Germany, both to the same effect; namely, one to the Balia, and the other to Pandolfo, informing them of his coming into Italy, and expressing his confidence in the good faith of this city, and advising them to make no further payments to France under their agreement, showing them that, having been made against him, it is no longer valid. The letter to Pandolfo contains, besides the above, many particulars for his instruction, which he has shown to the Balia and others, and of which he is very proud.

I understand that the proposed coming of the Emperor does not please him at all, like one who is well off and sees no advantage in further labors; and speaking the other day with a friend he said to him, "If this Emperor comes, it will benefit "no one but the Pisans." But Pandolfo does not believe in the Emperor's coming, and relies upon the Swiss and the Venetians, who he thinks will not adhere firmly to him. Nevertheless he goes on making preparations: first, by making every one here believe that the Emperor is his particular friend, so as to deprive the malcontents of the hope of support; and secondly, by doing all he can really to make him so, although up to yesterday morning he had not received any letter from his envoy to the Emperor. I say this because I am told this morning that he received such letters last night, and if I can learn anything of their contents I will inform your Lordships.

In conversing with some of the Legate's people, and with some persons of intelligence, I learn that the object of his mission is to do all in his power to prevent the Emperor's coming; and by way of removing the necessity of his coming to Italy to be crowned, the Legate is authorized, jointly with another German cardinal whose name has escaped me, to crown the Emperor at home. But if he sees that the Emperor is resolved anyhow to come down into Italy, then he is to persuade him to come unaccompanied by any armed force; assuring him of the friendship of France, and all the guaranties of security he can ask for. And if all this does not produce the desired effect, and he sees that the Emperor is bent upon coming with an armed force, then he is carefully to find out the Emperor's resources, and whether they are sufficient to overcome all the obstacles he may encounter, and to report the same; and in such case he is to amuse the Emperor with assurances of the high opinion which his Holiness the Pope entertains of his Majesty.

I mention these things to your Lordships, not as being true, but simply as having heard them from men of serious character; and mainly because I know that it will do no harm that you should know these things, as I said in the beginning.

Whilst writing, the brother of the Cardinal Ceserino arrived at this hostelry, with fifteen horse; he is on his way from Rome to Bologna on some business, and will remain here to-morrow, and then go on to Florence with the Legate. It is thus that the stream is constantly swelling.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

SIENNA, 14 August, 1507, 21st hour. *Secret.*

List of Presents sent by the Siennese to the Legate.

2	skinned and dressed calves.
6	skinned and dressed sheep.
13	sacks of grain, 4 bushels per sack.
9	baskets of bread.
2	barrels of mulberries.
2	barrels of melons.
12	barrels of wine, of 12 flasks each.
9	barrels of fowls, 6 pairs each.
4	barrels of young geese, 6 pairs each.
3	baskets of large pigeons, 5 pairs each.
14	dishes of seafish.
12	pairs of white wax torches.
12	lumps of wax, 5 pounds each.
16	boxes ?
24	marchpanes (fruit-cakes).

MISSION TO THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.*

LETTER I.

Magnificent Signori, etc. :—

I wrote to your Lordships from Gabella on the 22d instant, and to-day, being the 25th, I am at Geneva, and shall leave to-morrow for Constanz, which is seven days' journey from here, according to what I am told by Piero da Fossan, who is engaged here in commerce with Florence, and has advised me as to the route, which I shall follow, and recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

25 December, 1507.

LETTER II.

Magnificent Signori, etc. :—

I arrived here on the 11th, having been retarded since my departure from Florence by the great distances, the bad condition of the roads, and the horrible season of the year; and having moreover to contend with worn-out horses, and being very short of money. With all this I could not, even at any

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* The two Reports "On the Affairs of Germany," and the "Discourse on the Affairs of Germany and on the Emperor," printed in this volume, are the result of the observations made by Machiavelli during this mission.

Upon the report of the Emperor's coming into Italy to have himself crowned, and upon his demand for money of the Florentine government, they had sent Francesco Vettori as ambassador to the Emperor, with instructions to agree to the payment of the amount asked for, or not, according as he should find what truth there was in the Emperor's contemplated coming into Italy, which had other season of the year, have saved more than three days in the journey here from Gabella, where I left the diligence, to this place, a distance of over six hundred miles. I wrote from Gabella and from Geneva to inform you of my whereabouts, which letters, if received, will have saved your Lordships all anxiety on my account.

On my arrival here I found Francesco Vettori enjoying the favor and highest esteem of the whole court. I communicated to him your Lordships' instructions, and, as you have been already informed of all that has taken place here since my arrival, I shall say nothing further on that subject, but confine myself entirely to such matters as Vettori has not written about; and by this despatch will inform you merely of what I have seen and heard during my journey from Geneva here that may be worthy of your Lordships' notice, so that you may be able to form a more correct judgment of the state of things here. And to begin with what I have heard, I beg to say that I made four halts on Swiss territory between Geneva and Constanz, and have gathered with greatest care all I could respecting the condition and manners of these people, and upon the point as to what either of the sovereigns of France or Germany might hope for from them. I have learned from various persons, but mainly from a gentleman at Fribourg, a very accurate man, who has commanded one of their companies, and is also familiar with Italian affairs, that the main body of this country consists of twelve communities leagued together, and called Cantons, the names of which are Fribourg, Berne, Zurich, Lucerne, Basle, Soleure, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug, Glarus, Schwytz, and Schaffhausen. These are united in such manner that whatever is resolved upon in their Diet is always observed by all of them, and none of the Cantons will oppose it. It is an error, therefore, on the part of those who say that four of the Cantons will go with France, and eight with the Emperor, as this cannot be unless it had been first resolved upon by their

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caused alarm to the Florentines lest it should in some way prove prejudicial to their interests. Machiavelli was sent with an ultimatum agreement, in case it should be necessary to conclude one with the Emperor, and for the purpose of gathering precise information respecting this threatened visit; it seeming to the Gonfalonier Soderini that Vettori was not very consistent in his reports. The Emperor, however, did not come, owing to the obstacles interposed by the Venetians.

Respecting this intended visit of the Emperor's, see also Guicciardini, Lib. VII.

Diet; but were it so decided by the Diet, then the one would be served badly, and the other worse. But what has given rise to this supposition is, that the king of France has for the past eight months kept two agents here, and still keeps two of his confidential men here, Rochalbert and Pierre Louis, and, for the purpose of receiving prompt reports from them, has established a regular mail service from Gabella, or whatever other place his representatives may go to. These men have of late endeavored to unite all the Cantons, and by means of money have both privately and publicly poisoned the whole country. In this way they have prevented and still impede all action of the Diet in favor of the Emperor, so that up to the time of my passing numerous meetings of the Diet have been held, but no resolutions passed. True, there was to have been another Diet held on the day of the Epiphany at Lucerne, where the two French emissaries have gone; but it is not known yet what this Diet may have brought forth. The person at Fribourg, however, whom I have already referred to, told me that the king of France had too much money for the Diet to resolve anything adverse to him; but when the King of the Romans also had money, they would not be able to refuse to serve him, but in that case they would manage to serve him without at the same time being hostile to France. And thus everybody is of the opinion that, when the Emperor is not lacking money, he will also not lack Swiss to serve him; for they fear that, if he paid them without getting their services in return, they would draw upon themselves the hostility of the Empire, and they do not wish to oppose the decision of all Germany; that is the reason why they do not openly declare for France. But the objections they make to the wishes of the Emperor are, that they do not want to be opposed to France, but will serve him everywhere else. The Emperor, on the other hand, demands that they shall either remain neutral, or furnish him a small number of men, of whom he shall be able to dispose as he pleases. The Swiss, however, will not remain neutral, and want to be employed in large numbers, and yet they do not want to fight against France unless the king should give them special cause. These are the difficulties that have been the cause of so many meetings of the Diet and such few conclusions; and it is supposed that the present, like all the previous ones, will bring forth nothing but useless talk.

Besides the above-named twelve Cantons there are two other Swiss communities; viz. the league of the Grisons and that of the Valdenses, both bordering on Italy; and a few days before my passing through Fribourg an ambassador from the Emperor had gone through on his way to the Valdenses to dispose them adversely to France and favorably to himself. These two communities, however, are not so united to the other twelve Cantons but what they can take separate action in opposition to the others; it being, however, fully understood between them that for the defence of their liberties they are always to be well united. Thus, whoever fails to secure the services of the one league may yet secure those of the other. For the common defence each of the twelve Cantons furnishes four thousand good troops; but for any service out of the country they are bound to supply only from one thousand to fifteen hundred. This difference arises from the fact, that for the defence of the country every man who votes for the magistrates is bound to render military service, whilst in the other case the service is purely voluntary; thus, in the one case they are bound by law, and in the other case they are attracted only by the pay. At Schaffhausen I met two gentlemen from Genoa, who were returning to Italy by the same route that I had just come over, and when I asked them about the Emperor and his projected visit to Italy, they said to me, "By this time the Emperor has left "Augsburg for Italy, but we don't believe you will find him "until you reach Trent." They told me further, that the different provinces of the Empire furnished him, besides the troops, a sum of one hundred and fifty thousand scudi; and that he had made a loan of the Fuggers of one hundred thousand scudi, for which he has assigned them some sort of security; and that he was about making an agreement with the Swiss, according to which they were to serve him, but not against France. Since then I tarried half a day at Constanz to gather information; and at church there I conversed with two Milanese, and with Arrigo the composer, whose wife is at Florence. I also talked with an ambassador of the Duke of Savoy, called Monsignore Disviri, to whom I paid a long visit, and afterwards dined with him. From the former I obtained only general information and much exaggerated; but Monsignore Disviri, when I pressed him with questions about the Emperor's project and the steps which he had taken, etc., said to me in a formal manner: "You want to know in two hours "what I have not been able to learn in many months; and the "reason is, that one must either know the conclusions resolved "upon, or judge of the result by the preparations. The first is "very difficult, because this nation is very discreet, and the "Emperor observes the greatest secrecy in everything he does; "if he but changes his lodgings, he sends his cook only after "he has himself been for an hour on the way, so that no one "may know where he is going. As for his preparations, they "seem very formidable: troops come from various quarters, "and are scattered over a great extent of country; but to "know the exact truth, one must have a spy in every place. "For my part, desirous to err as little as possible, I can only "tell you that the Emperor will establish three gathering-"places, one at Trent towards Verona, another at Besançon "in the direction of Burgundy, and the third at Carabassa in "the Friuli. A great many troops were also collected here at "Constanz by order of the Diet, and have been promptly distributed through the neighborhood. I assure you the movement is most extensive, and likely to lead to some important "result, either of peace or war, between the two sovereigns."

This is what I heard at Constanz from a man who is sixty years of age, and generally esteemed as a prudent man. I have learned nothing further since my arrival here, unless it be that at Trent and thereabouts there must be some four thousand infantry and a thousand horse fit for service. As to money, I do not hear of the Emperor's having more than the hundred and twenty thousand scudi promised by the Empire in addition to the troops granted by the Diet at Constanz; and to this must be added the amounts paid by those who are bound to furnish him troops, but who have compounded for it by paying him money; and it is said that where the Empire is bound to furnish three men, they actually send only two, and pay for the third in money. As to the loan which the Emperor has made of the Fuggers, as well as other loans from merchants on pledges of land, neither the amounts nor the conditions are clearly known; nor is anything known as to the sums which he claims from Italy. But the Venetians expect to gain great credit by their show of extensive preparations, and have circulated reports of having to furnish altogether about fifteen thousand mounted men.

Since his visit here, this sovereign has summoned a diet of all the communes of Tyrol, and has demanded their aid in his enterprise. I understand that they have resolved to furnish him five hundred infantry, which are to be paid by them for a certain length of time; and if this resolution is carried out, then these troops may be regarded as though they were already at Trent. News came here on Saturday that a contingent of one thousand horse from the king of Bohemia, and paid by him, is within five days' march from here. With all this, time passes, and where on the one hand there is a gain, there is a loss on the other; for although the fine season is coming, yet the money destined for the troops, and which according to the Diet the Empire is to pay, is being uselessly consumed. This is all I have heard; but what I have seen is, that from Geneva to Memmingen, throughout the many miles I have traversed, I have not seen a single mounted man or foot-soldier. True, in the neighborhood of Constanz, in some of the places off the road I heard some drumming, and was told by some that it came from some remnants of infantry that had stopped there, but others said that it was peasants merrymaking. At Memmingen I found the troops of the Duke of Würtemberg were beginning to arrive; they were said to consist of four hundred horse. It was reported that the Duke wanted his troops to stop here whilst he went to court to learn from the Emperor where he wished him to go. After that I met on the way from Innspruck here all together about one hundred horse belonging to men-at-arms. Last Friday there was a review here of one hundred and twenty infantry, being the contingent sent here by some of the communes. The Emperor is here, but it is not known when he will leave. It is said that he has not been so near to Italy as now since Cardinal d'Amboise was here; and it is supposed that he will soon go to Trent to look after his enterprise.

This is all that occurs to me to write, unless it be to recommend myself to your Lordships, and beg you will instruct me what to do now; for having made known your views and intentions to Francesco Vettori, there remains nothing for me to do, and therefore I hope your Lordships will give me leave to return home. *Valete!*

Botzen, 17 January, 1508.

Should your Lordships, for some reason or other, desire me to stay here, — which I hardly believe, however, — then I beg you will either send me some money, or write to Francesco to supply me with some on your Lordships' account, although Francesco has never refused me anything, but this was always on my own account.

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

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LETTER III.*

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My last of the 16th ultimo was sent by my courier Simone from Memmingen; since then I have made in one stretch about five hundred miles, sometimes in the suite of the Emperor and sometimes in that of the Cardinal, so that on the 9th I reached Botzen, where the Emperor had already arrived; and two days after Machiavelli also came, who had travelled by way of Savoy and Switzerland, and who, fearing that he might not be safe in Lombardy, where he had been subjected to a very harsh examination, had destroyed all his letters. But he gave me your instructions verbally, which were to this effect: that you were willing to offer to the king † as high a sum as fifty thousand ducats, beginning with thirty thousand and going finally up to fifty thousand, — endeavoring to make the best terms possible for our republic. Payment to be made in at least three instalments: the first, when the Emperor shall be with his army in a city that is entirely Italian; the second, upon his entering on Tuscan territory; and the third, in three months after, or, better still, on his arrival at Rome, as can best be arranged. In return, you demand of the Emperor the restitution of all your possessions, and the conservation of all your present state and dominion; but if restitution cannot be made, you will yield that point. But you desire to have the

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* These despatches of Francesco Vettori are given here, because they were in great part written by Machiavelli, and serve to explain this mission.

† "The king" here means the King of the Romans, a title borne by the Emperor Maximilian and other German Emperors.

Emperor understand that you regard fifty thousand ducats as no small matter, and will not abate one tittle of the other matters. On the contrary, you want that in the drawing up of the treaty it shall be stated in the most ample manner, in words and terms, that you shall be secure against having to pay anything more than the stipulated amount, either to his Majesty directly or indirectly, or to any of his princes or generals, or any one else for his account; and that you are not to be vexed by any further demands, either by him or any of his people who may follow him into Italy, or who may come afterwards; and to the effect that the present state of our republic shall remain unharmed and intact, and that you shall continue to exercise the jurisdiction and full possession of your city, and of all castles, villages, and places, the same as you exercise and possess at the present time; and that your dignity, authority, and pre-eminence shall in no wise be diminished, either by himself or any of his people. Machiavelli said a good deal more upon this point, but all to the same effect. I asked immediately an audience of the king, and the evening after Machiavelli's arrival I was received by his Majesty, and exposed to him in as few words as possible your Lordships' views and intentions. At first I offered thirty thousand ducats in three payments, demanding that the Emperor should in return promise restitution and conservation, as communicated to me by Machiavelli. Thereupon Collaun answered, in presence of the Emperor, that this was a less offer than what you had made in 1502, and that our demands were at the same time greater; and that as to restitution, it was not worth while to speak of it. Seeing that the negotiation was likely to be broken off, if I did not give up the question of restitution, and that I should not be listened to any further if I did not increase the sum, I thought it well to go as far as forty thousand ducats, and to make the first payment more considerable, so that the king, in view of the greater immediate payment, to which he attaches great value, might condescend to accept that offer, and that thus your Lordships would save ten thousand ducats. And therefore I said that, knowing how well you were disposed towards his Majesty, I would venture in your Lordships' name to promise forty thousand ducats, of which sixteen thousand should be paid upon his entrance into the first town wholly Italian, and the remainder in two subsequent payments, according as might be agreed on the conclusion of this arrangement. I added, that although you attached the highest importance to Pisan affairs, and that your rights there were well founded, yet to show to his Majesty that you would leave nothing undone to prove to him your filial devotion, your Lordships would be content to say nothing about Pisa, but asked merely for the conservation and security of your present dominions. His Majesty listened with evident pleasure to what I said, and it seemed to me, so far as I could judge from external indications, that he was inclined to accept this proposition; but at the same time he made Collaun reply to me that he was pleased to have this offer, and would give me an answer the following day.

Before I took my leave he called Pigello* aside and asked him who this Secretary was that had just arrived, and by what route he had come; adding that it seemed to him the Florentines were making a good beginning. It was Wednesday evening, the 12th, when I had this audience, and should have had the answer on the 13th; but it has been put off from day to day, and has not been received up to the present, and for that reason I decided upon writing, so that your Lordships might not remain in uncertainty as to Machiavelli's mission. This delay may be caused by the absence of Lango † from court, he having gone to Augsburg to obtain money; but he is expected back very shortly, for I have been told that the Emperor was pleased with the offer which I have made, and that his hesitation results from his apprehension that it may prove nothing but words by which you would not hold yourselves bound; and that, even if an actual agreement were made upon that basis, the first payment would have to be raised to twenty thousand ducats. I have been furthermore told, that it was Messer Paolo de Lichtenstein and Serentano, two of the most important men here, as I have written you before, who cause this delay in the answer, for the sake of obtaining better terms; and that it will be necessary to secure their good will and friendship. As I have neither instructions nor orders upon this point, I could do nothing in the matter except with words, which I employed with great warmth, but know not whether that has sufficed them. I wanted to write you this, so that you may understand the whole matter as well as I do myself, and that, in case nothing should be concluded, you may deliberate as to what is to be done, and inform me of your resolve.

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* Pigello Portinari, a Florentine.

† Matthew Lang was secretary, minister, and favorite of the Emperor Maximilian. He afterwards became successively Bishop of Gurck (a city in Carinthia between Villach and Gratz), and Cardinal. He played an important part in all the affairs of the Emperor.

Your Lordships see now the course I have taken in this negotiation, and the reasons that have been given me for the Emperor's not having replied; so that, considering the gracious manner in which I was listened to by his Majesty and his remarks to Pigello, I have reason to believe that what I have been told is true to a great degree. According to your instructions, it remains for me still to offer the fifty thousand ducats; but I do not believe that the difficulty consists in the greater or less sum, but rather in the amount of the first payment, which they would like me to raise as much as possible. For my part, whatever answer may be made, I am not for going as high as fifty thousand ducats, nor for promising twenty thousand as the first payment, without first having your reply, for I judge that the state of things here will afford me time to await your instructions. But should I see the contrary, and that things come to a certain point, which they may reach at any moment, then I shall not hesitate to yield both the one and the other. And as you charge me to make the first payment only when the Emperor with his army shall have arrived at a city wholly upon Italian soil, I am discreetly endeavoring to ascertain the exact position of Trent; and the people of the country tell me that the boundary line between Italy and Germany runs more than a mile this side of Trent. I mention this so that you may be fully informed upon every point; although I do not think that you can withdraw from the offer which I have made under your instructions without incurring obloquy, and exciting great indignation on the part of the Emperor.

I have little to add to what I have before written about affairs here. The Emperor is now within seven leagues of Trent; he has convoked a diet of his own subjects here, to induce them to aid him with some money in this enterprise. They have not yet decided upon anything, but will most probably accord him some men and money. There are but few troops here in the place where we are now, but between here and Trent troops are quartered in every village, and are said to amount altogether to one thousand horse and about four thousand infantry; and within a few days they confidently expect some fifteen hundred horse that have remained behind, also a large force of infantry, although if the Emperor has money he can raise in this country as many infantry as he may want.

As I have written several times before, it is thought that, if his Majesty will pay the Swiss, the majority of them will come to serve him; but he would prefer their remaining neutral, which they refuse, saying that they cannot live without pay from some one; and in the end it will result in the Emperor's taking them into his pay, provided he has money.

As regards the subject of money I am still of the opinion that his Majesty will have difficulty in providing it, and for that reason it may still be that he will make an arrangement either with France or with the Venetians. But anyhow, to whatever arrangement he may have to resort to enable him to come into Italy, he will do it gladly, if he cannot get the money together in any other way; although he is making every effort to be able to move without any such arrangement or help from Italy. Notwithstanding that there were rumors that the different princes and cities of the Empire had resolved in the Diet to pay the troops furnished to the Emperor for six months only, yet it is now reported that they have extended it for six months more.

The Venetians seem to occupy themselves with providing for the defence of their frontiers. Nevertheless they permit letters and everything else to pass without hindrance; and you have probably heard that, after disarming the infantry as they were leaving the Mantuan territory, upon which they had come, they have nevertheless restored these arms by sending them back.

A marriage is said to have been arranged between the son of the Archduke and a daughter of the king of England, and every one looks upon it as positively fixed. Nothing else occurs to me to write except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

FRANCESCO VETTORI.

BOTZEN 17 January, 1508.

LETTER IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 17th instant, and sent the letter by Rafaello Rucellai, who was returning in haste to Florence. In that letter I advised you of Machiavelli's arrival here, and of my having exposed to the Emperor the commission which he brought me from your Lordships; and that, to judge from his Majesty's manner, I believed that he was pleased with the proposition I had made him. I also mentioned that he had told me that he would give me an answer the next day, that is on the 13th, but that he had not replied up to the date of my writing, and gave you also what I supposed to be the cause of this delay. Of that letter I enclose a copy with the present one. I kept Diavolaccio here for no other reason than to have some one ready to send whenever the Emperor's answer should be received by me. Since then it has been deferred from day to day; but I did not ask for it lest I should seem too anxious for it, nor did I show myself entirely indifferent about it, so that it might not seem as though you would like me to forget about it.* But, thank God, I was sent for this morning; and in the presence of the Emperor, both Lang and Serentano being there, Lang said to me that his Majesty, having heard the offer which I had made in your name, had carefully examined it, but had come to the conclusion that, considering your demand for the conservation and guaranty of your state and dominion, and in view of the importance of your city, the amount of money offered was entirely too small; and therefore he was not satisfied, and declined its acceptance. But that he had concluded to make a demand of you which you could certainly not refuse; and that was, that you should lend him the sum of twenty-five thousand ducats, to be paid at once in cash; and that upon its receipt his Majesty would address you a letter, written in his own hand, and sealed with his seal, and with all customary formalities, by which he would obligate himself to the conservation and guaranty of your state and dominion. This letter, however, was not to be given to you at once, but would be deposited in the hands of the Fuggers for the purpose hereinafter explained. After having made this payment of twenty-five thousand ducats, you are to appoint ambassadors for the sole purpose of coming to meet him whenever you shall hear of his arrival on the banks of the Po; but these ambassadors to be empowered also to conclude a treaty with him, and after the conclusion of such treaty the Fuggers are to hand over to you the above specified letter. But if no treaty is concluded, then the said letter is to be returned by the Fuggers to the Emperor, who will obligate himself to return you the twenty-five thousand ducats within the year. If, however, a treaty is concluded, then the twenty-five thousand ducats are to be treated as a payment on account of whatever sum shall be provided for by the treaty. Lang endeavored in a long argument to demonstrate to me the honest purpose and reasonableness of this proposition; saying that, if you desired to be esteemed by the Emperor, you ought to give him this proof of your affection, and that on his part his Majesty would pledge you his royal word to treat you as friends. In view of the occasion and the persons in whose presence I was, I answered briefly, that the offer which I had made really exceeded your ability, but that I had made it to show that you were not willing to fall short of your ancestors in recognizing his Majesty as your father and protector; but that as to the proposition made in reply, I could not see how it could be accepted by you, seeing that, whilst the payment was certain, the security was most uncertain; but that in accordance with my duty I would communicate it to your Lordships; and for the purpose of more thoroughly understanding it, I would come and dine with Lang. I did this so as to have an opportunity of telling him more frankly what I thought of the matter, not being able to do so at the moment without risk of wearying the Emperor. In explaining the reply, Lang said, whilst his Majesty was still present, that it would be well for me to write by several routes, and that I should give him a copy of my letter to you, so that he might send it; for as the Emperor was going to Trent, the Venetians might destroy the roads in that direction, and therefore I ought to write you to send your reply to Bologna to an agent of his called Doctor Rabelar, who would always, even in times of greatest difficulty, have the means of forwarding it safely; but your Lordships must not on that account fail to write me by your own couriers. I shall furnish Lang with the desired copy of my letter to you, in which I shall however only write the proposition made by him, without touching upon the other circumstances.

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* **From here on to page 97 the letter is in cipher.**

A little while after my leaving the Emperor I had a long conversation with Lang, and told him that I was sure you would not accept his proposition, which required you to pay, and gave nothing in return; that in fact the Florentine people would never consent to such a thing. And as Lang said to me that the Emperor had charged him again to assure me that he would treat your Lordships most graciously, I answered that I did not doubt it, and that every other person that ever had any particular dealings with his Majesty would believe it equally; but that a republic and a people acted very differently from a private person, and that the general belief in Florence would be that they would lose the money without gaining the friendship of the Emperor, and that your Lordships knew as well as he did how sovereigns borrow money, and how they pay it back. And therefore it would be much better, and save time, if the Emperor should accept our proposition, which was in every way proper, and even beyond your ability; but if withal his Majesty thought differently, then let him say what he wanted, so that the matter might at once be arranged. Lang replied in general terms, but finally asked me what your Lordships were willing to do to settle this matter at once; to which I answered that I had already stated it, and that it was now for him to speak. I said this to see whether I could in any way find out what the Emperor really wanted of us; but in the end we reached no other conclusion than that I should communicate to your Lordships the answer made, which I have already done above, and that meantime we should both think the matter over, and discuss it further at another meeting. Lang had stated to me from the first that he was glad he was not the only one interested in your affairs, and assured me again of the same at our last interview, saying that he needed help; which refers to Serentano and Messer Paolo Lichtenstein, as I wrote you in my last. Your Lordships will reflect upon this point, and let me know your decision. I did not deem it advisable to make the offer of fifty thousand ducats, for I apprehend that, were I to do so without any result, it might prejudice any other proposition which you might decide to make through your ambassadors.

In thinking over the reasons that make the Emperor so desirous to adhere to the plan of borrowing, and so unwilling to conclude any definite convention, I can imagine nothing but what I have already written several times; namely, that according to the decision of the Diet he cannot enter into any obligations with any Italian power; and therefore, whilst on the one hand he is very needy, and on the other unable to give any security, he tries the middle course of borrowing. He attempted to act in the same way with Ferrara, but did not succeed; and it was thus he acted with Sienna, where Pandolfo in return for his money received nothing but fair promises. For truly if it were not for this reason, seeing how his Majesty first received your offer, he would either have accepted it, or made a counter proposition not varying very much from yours. It will be necessary, therefore, in your decision of this matter, to keep in mind this plan of borrowing, and, should you conclude to put faith in the promises of this sovereign, a less sum than twenty-five thousand ducats ought to be sufficient for him; but should you determine to decline this proposal, then you must decide what you will do, and inform me accordingly. Nor do I think that it would be amiss if you were to send the ambassadors at once, for, as I have already said above, the Emperor has spoken of it; and it would be well even if they were to come farther north to meet his Majesty than he suggested. It was only to-day that Lang said to me that you had tried to be too prudent, and had never been willing to believe in the Emperor's coming into Italy; for if you had believed it, the appointed ambassadors would have endeavored to come here. Although I duly met all these remarks, yet it may well be that their coming would greatly facilitate matters; for otherwise I do not think the Emperor will change his mind. It may also be that the Diet has not tied his hands, and that he does not wish to conclude an arrangement, because he has the intention of asking such a sum, which, although you refused it now, yet when you had once begun to pay, and the Emperor should be victorious, you would not allow yourselves to be asked for more than once.*

The preparations for the Emperor's enterprise are more active than they were at the time of my last writing, 17th instant; infantry and men-at-arms continue to arrive here daily on their way to Trent, and others may be going there by different routes, which we do not see. Three days ago there was a review here of five hundred infantry and some forty gunners; and from the 19th to the 22d of this month some thirty mounted guns, large and small, have passed through the Grisons into the Valtelline, whence they may be taken to Trent; and it is said that an arrangement has been concluded with the league of the Grisons according to which they are to furnish the Emperor eighteen hundred infantry at his cost, and that money has been sent there to prevent any one's accepting pay from France. Yesterday one hundred mounted men arrived here, being sent by the cities of Augsburg and Ulm, and sixty more are expected to-day from Nuremberg. Another review was held here yesterday of about six hundred infantry; and a proclamation has been published, that all who have no engagement and want money can have both. Every day some three or four men-at-arms pass through here at a time, and likewise large quantities of munitions of war and provisions. The Venetians have sent all the men-at-arms and infantry which they had in the Veronese this side of Chiusi to the forts around Roverdo. Thus matters cannot remain long in their present condition. As I have written before, we may at any moment witness an unexpected movement; and if this conflagration is once lighted and some other arrangement be not made, your Lordships will see how difficult it will be for me to receive news from you, or for me to communicate with you from here. This is confirmed by what Lang said this morning in the Emperor's presence, and which shows that he has no relations with the Venetians. Perhaps he may not wish it, or it may be that he has no hope of it, notwithstanding that the General of the Order of the Umiliati went a few days ago to Venice; it is not known, however, whether the Emperor sent him there *proprio motu*, or whether the Venetians have requested his coming, or whether he has gone with the view of ingratiating himself with the Venetians, as this priest derives his revenues from their dominions. I will see what I can learn about this affair, and will inform your Lordships.

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* Here ends the cipher.

It is not known when his Majesty will leave, nor do I believe that it is known by any one but himself; and therefore no one can tell when hostilities will actually begin, or the precise spot where they will break out; the general opinion is that it will not be beyond February, at furthest.

I have heard that the Emperor, unable to conclude anything with the Duke of Ferrara, wanted to dismiss the ambassador of that prince, but that he has been dissuaded from doing so by his ministers, and therefore he is still here.

BOTZEN, 24 February, 1508.

I have given Diavolaccio three Rhenish florins for his expenses.

P. S.—I have to observe to your Lordships that the Emperor seems to me very obstinate in his opinions, and that he considers himself so strong that I do not believe any arrangement can be made with him without ready money; and that twenty thousand ducats cash down will do more than the promise of fifty thousand hereafter.*

FRANCESCO VETTORI.

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LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

Since Machiavelli's arrival here I have written four letters to your Lordships, three of which, however, were very much of the same tenor. The first, of the 17th instant, was sent by the hands of Rafaelle Rucellai, and contained an account of the manner in which I communicated to his Majesty my instructions from your Lordships, to which he listened with pleasure and promised to give a reply on the following day, but which he has deferred from day to day since the 13th until now, without my knowing the cause of this delay; although I did not fail adroitly to solicit an answer. In the same letter I gave you some account of the state of things here, and have since then sent you a duplicate of it by Diavolaccio on the 25th, together with my letter of the 24th with his Majesty's reply, to the effect "that he was not willing to accept the offer of forty thousand "ducats, but wanted an immediate loan of twenty-five thousand "ducats, in consideration of which he would give a guaranty "for the conservation of your possessions, which was to be de-"posited in the hands of the Fuggers, with the condition that, "when he should have arrived on the banks of the Po, you "should send ambassadors to him with power to conclude a "definite agreement with him upon all points. And upon the "conclusion of such an agreement the Fuggers were to give up

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* This P. S. is written in cipher.

"to your Lordships the letter of guaranty, and the twenty-five "thousand ducats loaned by you are to be credited to you on "account of whatever sum might then have been agreed upon. "But in case no agreement should be arrived at, then the Em- "peror is to repay you within one year the amount loaned, and "is to receive back from the Fuggers the letter of guaranty.

"I wrote you at the same time what reply I had made to "this proposition, and the long conversation which I had had "on the subject, and that I had been unable to obtain any "other terms. I also mentioned that his Majesty's project "was being pushed with increased vigor; but as I assume "that that letter reached you safely, I shall not now repeat "all I said therein, and shall confine myself merely to touch- "ing upon the main points. Nevertheless, I sent you, out of "respect to his Majesty's wishes, a copy of the same through "the Emperor's hands, as he had so commanded me. And as "I was told that, in view of the danger of my not receiving "your letters in future, because of the destruction of the roads, "I should advise you to send your letters to Bologna to the "care of Doctor Rabelar, a confidential agent of the Emperor's "who had facilities for forwarding them, I would request you "at the same time to send duplicates of them also by your own "couriers. In another letter I wrote you that I had learned "from a great personage at this court that he believed he would "be able to induce his Majesty to give you the guaranty upon "your paying him the sum of twenty thousand ducats at once, "with a promise of another like sum in four months; but as "this personage is not always near the Emperor, it is quite "possible that he may deceive himself. I mentioned further- "more, that Lang had said to Pigello that he would take no "part in the matter unless at least one hundred thousand "ducats were offered. I sent a copy of that letter also by "way of Ferrara on the 26th, so that at least one would reach "you anyhow, and I added, that the reason why I thought the "Emperor would be more difficult in his demands than at first "was the return of Lang from Augsburg, where he had collected "considerable sums of money. I had understood, moreover, "that the twelve Cantons were resolved to remain neutral, so "that he would have but little or nothing to spend there." *

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* All within the quotation marks was written in cipher in this, as well as in the subsequent letters.

Afterwards, on the 28th, your Lordships' courier Baccino arrived with letters of the 19th, in which you inform me of your having sent Mancino to me on the 23d ultimo; but he has never made his appearance here. So much time having elapsed since then makes me fear that he has met with some mishap; and you must know that, with the exception of Machiavelli, the last letter or messenger from your Lordships was a letter sent by Simone, dated November 4. Your last by Baccino does not require a reply, for it seems to me that he was sent to me by your Lordships more for the purpose of having some one by whom I could write in return than for any other reason.

There have been rumors here of disturbances in Bologna, but we have heard since that they amounted to nothing.

From your Lordships' letter it would seem that, according to the reports from Rome and Mantua, the preparations of the Emperor are slacking off; but from my own observations I can tell you that they are being pushed with rather increased energy. I wrote you from Augsburg why the troops that had entered the Mantuan territory had turned back; and that the Venetians had disarmed them on their return, but have since then restored their arms to them. I also wrote about the Diet which the Emperor was to hold here, which was, however, not a general Diet of Germany, but was confined only to the inhabitants of the Tyrol, for the purpose of obtaining money from them; and that this Diet had resolved to furnish now one thousand infantry to be paid by them for three months. But that hereafter, when hostilities had actually commenced, and in case the Emperor should have need of more, they would send him five thousand additional, and organize ten thousand for the protection of the country.

Infantry and cavalry continue to arrive here daily, and since I have been here some six hundred or more horse must have passed. The troops of the Duke of Königsberg, amounting to four hundred, are but a short distance from here. More than two thousand infantry have passed since my arrival here; but the country is so large that it is impossible to see or hear of all; so that a large army might suddenly issue from here, which previously would not have seemed possible. At one time matters had advanced to that point that the Emperor came as far as here; but he left again this morning to visit certain castles in the vicinity, and it is believed that he will proceed to Trent within eight days, where he will find infantry, cavalry, and artillery. Every one can judge of the consequences, and one of three things must necessarily result; either the Emperor will only reap shame and lose his credit even in Austria, or he must attack Italy, or conclude an honorable peace. Certainly he will in no way want to incur shame, and therefore we must suppose that, if he is not able to effect an agreement according to his own views, he will have to decide upon war, and that very promptly.

I cannot judge how the Emperor stands with the Venetians. "Generale da Landriano returned from Venice on the 28th, "after having been there for three days. I am ignorant as to "what he brings from there; and on asking the Chancellor he "told me that he did not know, adding that the General had "been to see him, but told him nothing. I do not augur favor-"ably from this, particularly as I learn from your letter that "matters are cooling off in the direction of Rome. I appre-"hend that the Emperor, seeing that he cannot get any money "from Rome, of which he is constantly in need, may conclude "some arrangement with the Venetians; but I have nothing "positive on the subject. It is possible that I may learn some-"thing more about it before closing this letter."

I heard to-day that a herald had returned from Verona, whom his Majesty had sent there to inform the authorities of that city of his intended passage, and to demand quarters for twenty five thousand men. It is said that the Proveditori of Verona replied to the herald, that if his orders were to engage quarters for that number of unarmed persons he might do so; but in the contrary case he must let it alone, and must inform his Majesty that, if he intended to pass through as his father had done, he would be received with due honors, but if otherwise, he would not be received at all.

"Whether the Pope has furnished any money to the Em-"peror or not, I cannot say; and although some of the prin-"cipal personages of the court aver that he has, yet I have "not believed it, and presume that they said so merely to "induce you to move, etc. I have, indeed, learned that cer-"tain moneys recently collected have been deposited with the "Fuggers, but it may well be that this was also done with the "idea of producing the same effect. But your Lordships have "means of learning the truth about this at Rome, which I have "not here. I have not heard of his Majesty's having made any "new convention with the king of Aragon, but I learn that "the marriage project with England is definitely decided upon. "No money has been received from Italy, unless it be from "Sienna, which, however, I cannot say for certain, although I "have seen such indications that I believe it. According to "what I hear, his Majesty has gathered troops in three places: "in the Friuli he has the troops of the country; in Burgundy "he has many of the nobles and a considerable army; but according to my own observations his best troops are in the "direction of Trent. He might make a movement by way of "the Valtelline, for the league of the Grisons and the Valdenses, "which form no part of the twelve Cantons, furnish three thousand infantry paid by the Emperor.

"Respecting our own matters I have nothing new to say, "for I must await your reply; and, as I have always said, the "Emperor has marked you for a very high amount, and I do "not believe that he can be beaten down unless an immediate "payment should make him lower his demands. I have made "every effort to find out his Majesty's intentions as regards "giving you the guaranty; but Lang has always avoided the "question, saying that it was for us to make an offer; and he "added, 'When I asked you, you had no powers to conclude "anything,' and that it would be proper for your Lordships to "send a mandate to enable the arrangement to be concluded. "I beg your Lordships to think well of all these points, and "above all to send the ambassadors whilst the passes are still "open; for the farther they come this way, the more reason "shall we have to believe that they will prove of advantage to "our city. And to tell you what I think, I do not believe that "the Emperor will give you the guaranty of protection unless "you pay him cash down unconditionally; for he seems to "think more of ten thousand ducats cash than of twenty "thousand on time."

Not a word has been said to me of the letter presented by the Pisans to your commissioner, and which he declined to receive; nor has anything been said to me by the Emperor, or by any one else for him, about Genoese affairs. True, there was a Genoese here who complained to me that your Lordships had caused one of his compatriots to be arrested at San Pietro a Sieve, but that he did not know the cause; adding, that he had obtained letters from the Emperor in the manner which your Lordships write that you have been informed; and that his Majesty would send me some word on the subject, which, however, has not been done, or I should have made it duly known to your Lordships, as I have invariably done with regard to everything else that has been communicated to me by his orders.

The ambassador from Ferrara is informed that the Emperor has at last made known his conclusion, as follows: "If the "Duke will give me money in Germany, then we will discuss "the subject of the investiture there; but if he delays it until I "get into Italy, then we will wait until then to talk on the sub-"ject." And thus the matter remains in suspense.

Servitor

Francesco Vettori.

Botzen, February 1, 1508.

LETTER VI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last letters to your Lordships were of the 1st instant, and were sent to you by the courier Baccino. By way of precaution I repeated in those letters the substance of all I had written from the 24th ultimo up to the 1st instant, touching the Emperor's reply, and all that I had been able to learn respecting his intentions. I shall not repeat it again now, deeming it unnecessary, but I await your answer with impatience. Your Lordships' courier Coriolano has since then brought me a letter from your Lordships, but having carried it concealed in his shoe, it had become quite illegible; which, however, I regretted the less, as at the time of his being despatched from Florence Rafaelle Rucellai had not yet arrived there with mine of the 17th of January; I therefore conjectured that letter to be only a copy of your previous one. Two days after, another courier arrived bringing me yours of the 29th in reply to mine of the 17th; and upon carefully reading and examining it, I note two points that cause me great regret. The first is, that, "under the impression probably that matters "here were cooling off, you seem to think that I have gone too "far with my offers; and the other, that you should instruct "me at the same time to go even much further, whenever I "should perceive that matters here are pushed so earnestly as "to leave no doubt as to the Emperor's intentions anyhow, and "very soon, to descend into Italy. As to the first, it seems to "me that I have acted with all prudence, and in conformity "with my instructions, whether in consequence of my offer we "should have come to terms or not, or whether, in fixing the "place for making the payment, it should have been decided "to be in a city of Italy subject to some power other than the "Emperor; for thus, so far as you are concerned, the terms "of the agreement would have been left to the judgment of "your own wisdom. Both one and the other of these eventualities were fully discussed between Machiavelli and myself. "As to the second point, namely, the enlarging of my instructions by your Lordships, coupled with three conditions which "seem to me so difficult, I will not say merely for the wisest "and most resolute citizen of all Florence, but for a whole "senate, if it were here on the spot, and could see from day "to day as I do, and as every one else could see, how things "are going on. And although up to my last letter I have "always written to your Lordships in such manner that you "could form as good a judgment of matters here as I could "myself, yet I will discuss them a little more fully even, so "that you may see yourselves how matters can be appreciated, "and what good luck a man must have to conjecture rightly.

"I shall not attempt to recall the events previous to my arrival in this country, nor how often and in what manner things "have given rise to hopes that were as promptly dispelled; but "shall confine myself to what has taken place from the time of "the Emperor's coming to Botzen until now. His Majesty arrived here about the 6th of the past month; but whilst it was "supposed that his coming here would stimulate matters, it had "rather the opposite effect, when it was seen that he began by "assembling a Diet of his subjects, and that he was going around "begging for money, and that, moreover, he had but few troops "at Trent; so that seeing on the one hand that the Emperor "had gone so far that he could not turn back without discrediting his enterprise, and that, on the other hand, he had not "troops enough to advance any farther, every one became luke-

" warm. And thence it was that I said in my letter of the 17th, " that I believed there was time to await your reply. I added, " however, that, owing to the wide extent of the country and the " secrecy with which the Emperor manages his affairs, an unexpected movement might suddenly be made. Since then we " have seen that from the 20th ultimo until yesterday matters " have resumed a fresh vigor; that new levies of infantry have " been made which are constantly arriving here, that a large " quantity of artillery is being sent forward, and that a great number of horse are daily arriving. And although the infantry " which we have seen pass here did not amount to more than " three thousand, and the horse to one thousand, and that, so " far as I knew, there were not here and at Trent and vicinity " more troops than what I had written you in previous letters, " nevertheless it was believed for certain that a body of infantry " and cavalry proportionate to what we saw pass here was coming " by another route, so that the most sceptical had no longer " any doubt as to the enterprise being carried through. And " that is the reason why, in all my letters since the 24th ultimo " to the 1st instant, I wrote that the enterprise was being pushed " ahead, and that the Emperor would attack Italy anyhow, unless " he desired to remain covered with shame, or should conclude " some honorable arrangement." Subsequently, the Emperor left Botzen, and, passing through the different places between here and Trent, he entered that town at about the twenty-third hour on Thursday last. The following day there was a solemn procession, in which the Emperor personally took part. Being preceded by his Imperial heralds, and bearing a naked sword in his hands, he proceeded to church, where Lang addressed the people and informed them as regards the Emperor's enterprise against Italy, etc., etc. The whole of Friday guards were stationed at the city gates, who let every one come in, but permitted no one to go out. All men in the city that were used to handling an axe were employed to hew stakes fit for palisades, and in making gabions in their fashion. The authorities, moreover, caused such quantities of bread to be made as would suffice to feed ten thousand persons for four days. A number of rafts charged with every variety of munitions of war were sent down the Adige. In the evening all the men-at-arms received orders to hold themselves in readiness to mount at the first sound of the trumpet; and at about nine o'clock they all started in admirable silence.

The Marquis of Brandenburg with about five hundred horse and two thousand infantry went towards Rovere, and the Emperor with about fifteen hundred horse and some four thousand infantry took the road leading to Vicenza. It was said, moreover, and reason seemed to demand it, that orders had been given on the same day that simultaneously with the two attacks the forces assembled in the Friuli should also move and join those led by the Emperor when the occasion and the success of the movements should warrant it. It was also reported that orders had been given for the three thousand infantry of the league of the Grisons and the Valais should move towards the Valtelline. And thus with these dispositions, that were partly seen and partly heard, great hopes of complete success were excited.

On Saturday evening the Marquis returned with his cavalry to Trent, whereupon it was said that, having presented himself before Rovere, and surrounded the place and demanded admission within, the commander of the place had asked for six days' time to give a reply, but that only three were accorded him; and that thereupon the Marquis had returned with his cavalry, leaving his infantry at Petra, a place about two miles from Rovere. The Emperor, on the other hand, took possession of a mountain called the Siaga mountain, the spurs of which extend within twelve miles of Vicenza, where between the hills and the plain there is a castle belonging to the Venetians, and called Marostico, which holds a garrison of two thousand men, and can serve the possessor as a point of support for a good army, and from which Vicenza may conveniently be assailed. On the summit of this mountain there are several villages called the "Seven Communes," on account of their number being seven. These belong to the Venetians, by whom they are well treated; this position is an important one, and is strengthened by some trenches. The Emperor seized this position, and filled the trenches so that artillery could pass, and some pieces have already gone there. Yesterday morning it was reported that he had taken the castle of Marostico, "which gave rise to the expectation that there would be some tumults in Vicenza, as "there is with the Emperor a certain Messer Lionardo Trissino, "a Vicentine, a man of some influence, who being dissatisfied "with the Venetians had withdrawn for a while from his country. In the midst of these hopes it became known yesterday "evening that the Emperor, passing under the walls of Trent, "had gone to lodge in San Michele, ten miles from here on the "way to Botzen, so that every one became discouraged and remained in suspense. This sudden movement of the Emperor's "is variously commented upon; some apprehend that it may "have been caused by the Venetians under promise from them "to be his friends, but really with the view of observing him, "either to discredit or to entrap him. Others believe that it "was the result of his fatal facility of being influenced by "others, who had held out to him the expectation of a rising "in Vicenza, which however came to nothing. And there are "not wanting some who, holding to their first opinion, believe "in all the dispositions made by the Emperor, and who say "that, if he has turned back, it is for some measure of prudence "which, according to his habit, he wants to carry through in "person, although he might have intrusted it to some one else.

"This is the state of things at present; and I would ask the "wisest man in the world what he would do if he were charged "with such a commission as your Lordships have devolved "upon me. But I confess frankly, that, if I had received your "letter three days sooner, I would have promised to make the "payment not only at Trent, but even at Innspruck. And if I "had done so, and matters had afterwards been pushed with "less vigor, or had been deferred, I would like to know what "would then have been said at Florence; but I can guess without being told. I do not say this because I lack either faith or "courage to execute the commission with which your Lordships "have honored me; but to show the difficulties of that commission, in the execution of which no man, unless he be a "prophet, can divine the right thing except by chance. For "whether it be attempted to judge in detail, according to what "is seen from day to day, or on general principles, one cannot "arrive at any more definite knowledge than what I have written above. But I do know that, if any one desires to judge "according to the rules of reason whether a man will be victorious in such an enterprise, he must take into consideration "the number and quality of the troops which such individual "has, and his means of keeping them together, and how he "governs himself as well as his forces. No one doubts but "what the Emperor has plenty of soldiers, and of good quality; but how he will keep them together, there is the doubt.

"For he can only hold them by means of money; and being "on the one hand short of ready cash himself, he can never "be sure that it will be supplied by others; and on the other "hand, being extremely liberal, he piles difficulty upon difficulty; and although liberality is a virtue in princes, yet it is "not enough to satisfy one thousand when there are twenty "thousand more who are in need of it; and liberality does not "profit except those to whom it is extended. As to the personal conduct of the Emperor, I will only say that it cannot be "denied that he is an active and careful man, most skilful in the "art of war, laborious, and of great experience; and more reputed than any of his predecessors for the past hundred years. "But he is so good and humane a gentleman that he has become "too easy and too credulous, whence it comes that some persons have great doubts as to the success of his enterprise, as "I have stated above; so that, considering all things, there are "grounds for hopes as well as for fears respecting the result. "The grounds for hope are mainly two circumstances connected with Italy herself, and which until now have been the "cause of the success and renown of all who have assailed her; "and these are that she is constantly subject to revolutions and "changes, and that she has wretched armies; this accounts for "her marvellous conquests and equally marvellous losses. And "although the French of the present day have good armies, yet "not having the Swiss with them, by whose co-operation they "have been accustomed to achieve victory, and moreover not "feeling the ground safe under their feet, there is reason for "doubts as to their success. All these considerations cause "me to remain in doubt, and make me hesitate to take a resolution; for to give effect to your commission, it is necessary "that the Emperor should make the attack and be victorious.

"I find myself here at Trent, and know not whether the Emperor will leave San Michele to-day or to-morrow, and am "therefore kept in doubt as to what course to take. For the "Emperor had ordered me not to leave Botzen; but having received your Lordships' letter, and learning that the Emperor "had already started, I left immediately to come here and "make him your offer, fearing I might no longer be in time. "But finding, whilst on the way, that his Majesty had turned "back, my zeal has abated; and, unless I should hear something that would change my purpose, I am resolved to await "your reply. And even if I were to make your new offer "to the Emperor I should stipulate that the first payment "should be made in an Italian city subject to some other power, "provided, as I have said before, that nothing new occurs "that would prevent me. For just as everything seems lost "at this moment, so to-morrow things may resume a much "brighter aspect. And as we have seen that the feeble expedi-"tion of one thousand men into the Mantuan territory was "followed by a much more vigorous effort, so may the present "one be succeeded by another and more energetic one. Nor "do I believe, as I have written before, that twenty thousand "ducats down and fifty thousand in all, will induce the Em-"peror to give way, although he might perhaps yield if the "payment were made here and now; but for this it would be "necessary for him to have the documents in his hands, which, "as I have written several times, might influence him more "than anything else to give way. But be this as it may, if I "should have to decide and be obliged to resolve upon what "in a doubtful case might have a seeming certitude, I should "certainly take the course which presents least appearance of "danger. And in all these manœuvres I believe it to be "better, if we have to err, to assume that the Emperor will "go down into Italy, rather than believe the contrary. For "in the first case the error would not be irremediable, whilst "in the other I can see no remedy; or if there be one, it would "be very hazardous. But he who wants to gain the greatest "advantage must also risk more, and this would not be in "accordance with your Lordships' instructions.

"I have endeavored in this letter to show what conjectures "can be formed of the state of things here, and how I should "be disposed to act, so that your Lordships, in case you do not "approve it, may direct me otherwise. But should you not "direct me differently, then you must not be surprised if, after "all, events should not justify my decision.

"I have received the letter of exchange, with the accompany-"ing instructions, and shall make use of it when I can do so "for the advantage of our republic, according as I may deem "necessary. But this will be difficult, as it is three hundred "miles from here to Augsburg, and I see no way of making "any considerable payment here except through the Fuggers. "I believe you will have to address yourselves to them, that is "to say, arrange with the Fuggers of Rome to instruct their "correspondents here to pay whatever sum may be required. "And although I have said that the great distance may cause "difficulties, yet the Emperor, if the sum be considerable, will "doubtless find means for overcoming the difficulty through "the agency of the Fuggers."

Machiavelli is very short of money, although I have thus far not failed to supply him; but on no account in the world would it do to recall him, and I entreat your Lordships to approve his remaining here until all matters are settled; his presence here is necessary. Nevertheless, if it should happen that the affair of five hundred and fifty-nine florins require his presence in Florence, and the roads be not dangerous, I am sure his love of country would make him brave all possible danger and fatigue.

Servitor

Francesco Vettori.

Trent, 8 February, 1508.

LETTER VII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

The above is a copy of a letter I sent you on the 8th by the courier Ortolano. On the same day the Emperor, having heard that I had come to Trent and had received letters, sent for me, he being about two leagues from Trent. Lang, on his part, asked me whether I had anything to communicate, as I had received a courier. Having carefully examined your letter, I was not willing to make any other offer; for to promise fifty thousand ducats, the first payment on which to be made in a place in Italy not subject to the Emperor, would have been an offer that would not have been accepted; and to promise the first payment to be made in Trent did not seem to me advisable, seeing that the enterprise was being pushed with diminished rather than increased vigor. To enable your Lordships to understand the matter fully, I wrote on the 17th ultimo, that I had been informed that Trent was in Italy, and that to promise the first payment to be made in a place entirely in Italy might cause the Emperor to cavil and to demand the payment to be made in Trent itself; and therefore I wanted your Lordships to take this matter well into consideration. But I spoke only for myself, as neither the Emperor nor any one else had intimated to me anything on the subject. Now your Lordships instruct me, in case I should see matters were being pushed vigorously ahead, and could not do otherwise, to promise the first payment to be made at Trent. But seeing that their efforts were being rather relaxed, I was not willing to make that offer, and excused my coming to Trent the best way I could; I cannot say, however, whether Lang was satisfied with my explanation. He ordered me on the part of the Emperor to return to Botzen, where his Majesty arrived himself two days after, and directed the Cardinal as well as myself and all the other ambassadors to transfer our residence to Meran, a place about three leagues from here; because, as he said, he wanted Botzen evacuated to receive the men-at-arms that were expected to arrive. The Emperor left here to-day, according to some for Innspruck, according to others for Bruneck towards the Friuli, so as to start a movement from there.

As I stated in my last despatch, of which the above is a copy, I am embarrassed by your letter of the 29th, and would certainly be glad to escape the heavy charge I have on my shoulders, which is enough to frighten any man, no matter what his quality. If I am told that I am on the spot, I reply that I cannot judge of this business any better than your Lordships; for I have written you all I have seen and heard, and you can therefore decide best what course would be the most advantageous for our republic. My last despatch informed you fully as to the state of things here, and since then nothing new has occurred, unless it be that there are continually men-at-arms going on to Trent, notwithstanding that those who went on towards the frontier and towards Rovere have all returned to the vicinity of Trent. It is said, moreover, that there are many troops in the Friuli and in the Emperor's own territory, and that, so far as one can judge from appearances, the Emperor has need of nothing but money. But it is quite possible that this may be promptly and secretly supplied, and in such manner as to make it impossible to find it out. There is more than one community in Germany sufficiently rich to provide more money than what the Emperor needs. He might also obtain money from the Pope, or the Venetians, or from his

Most Christian Majesty of France, or from some other power, by means of special and secret treaties, so that it would not be possible to discover it.

I did not want to promise to make the first payment at Trent, for I did not see things as clearly as you had written me that I ought to see them before making such a promise. On the other hand, I should regret if, whilst I have moved to Meran and am thus separated from the court, the Emperor were to make a sudden movement forward, and that thus I should be no longer in time to make the offer which I am at liberty to make, and that you should then blame me and charge me with being the cause of ruin to the republic by not having made the offer to the Emperor in time. Nevertheless, I am resolved to take that course which reason suggests, believing that, whatever happens, I cannot justly be blamed. I wish very much that your Lordships would reply promptly, especially as I have no answer yet to the despatch I sent by Diavolaccio, and that you would indicate to me distinctly how I am to govern myself in this affair.

And upon this point it is my opinion that to come to terms with the Emperor and obtain from him the desired guaranty, your Lordships will have to adopt one of the two following methods. The first, and in my judgment the safest, would be to authorize the offer to be raised to one hundred thousand ducats, or even more, and to divide the payments in the best way possible; and to stipulate that the first payment shall be made when the Emperor is in Italy, and in a city not subject to him. The magnitude of the sum might possibly influence his acceptance of it. The second plan would be to offer a less amount, but an immediate and unconditional payment. Forty thousand ducats may possibly suffice for this; or say fifty thousand, in two equal payments. This latter offer I believe should be made before the Emperor enters Italy successfully, for after that it would be too late; and by making such offer beforehand it is quite possible that it may not be objected to by others, and that the Emperor, influenced by the immediate advantage, would accept it. In either the one or the other case the guaranty of the Emperor would be obtained; and having thus concluded an arrangement with him upon that point, your Lordships might agree upon another point, namely, to lend to the Emperor ten or fifteen thousand ducats, for which he has asked; and thus secure his good will, leaving the repayment of such loan to his discretion after he shall have been successful, hoping that, like Pandolfo Petrucci, you would be fairly used by his Imperial Majesty.

All these suggestions which I present to your Lordships are not based upon any certainty in the matter, but are mere conjectures of mine, in which I may be entirely mistaken. Your Lordships may have already gathered these views from my preceding despatches. In the present one I wanted to confine myself to these particulars, so that your Lordships might reconsider the subject again, and give me your instructions how to act in this matter. Nor do I write this because I think that you should decide either according to the one or the other suggestion, but so that you may be fully informed upon all points, and not impute any presumption to me; and that you may take it as proof of my earnest efforts to serve your Lordships. I must entreat you again to give me definite instructions, for I cannot think differently of the state of things here from what I have already written you. Were I the only one that is embarrassed I should blame myself, but I see the wisest as well as the most imprudent in the same state of uncertainty; and if when at court one can only form such an unsatisfactory judgment of things, it will be still worse now, being obliged to reside at a distance from the court.

Although your letter of the 29th authorizes me to offer the payment at Trent, I see that I may still have difficulty in making use of this authority, for I should avail myself of it only in the way in which it was given me, and the Emperor might decide upon entering Italy either by the Friuli or the Valtelline, or by way of Burgundy, in which case he might regard the offer of the payment at Trent as a mere mockery. And therefore your Lordships should not hold to the instructions heretofore given me, but send me fresh ones, and as promptly and precisely as possible, and without any conditions whatsoever; which you can well do, having had full reports from me as to the state of things here, and knowing all that I know myself. I regret very much to learn that the passes are closed, and that consequently your communications cannot reach me with that promptness which the present occasion demands. I beg your Lordships therefore to send me your instructions in duplicate by different routes, and both by messengers on foot as well as mounted, so that at least one of them may reach me. I should have sent Machiavelli back to the court, the same as I sent him the other day from here to Trent; but it would give umbrage to the court, and it would not do to disobey the Emperor's orders, as perhaps neither of us would afterwards be permitted to remain in Germany, and therefore I conform to the customs of the country.

As I leave to-day for Meran I must not omit to tell your Lordships that, in conversing with some of the principal personages of the court, they, no doubt wishing to present the Emperor's enterprise in a favorable light, assured me that a month would not pass without seeing that the Emperor had acted with consummate prudence and with great advantage to himself. Some others, however, not of the same high position, say that the Emperor has made this move to show to the people of the Empire that he needs larger means for his enterprise, and that it was a matter of honor for them to supply these means. Others, again, who reason upon these matters, say that the Emperor will have much difficulty in succeeding, or that he may be forced, if the Pope will not aid him with money, to make terms with his Most Christian Majesty of France, or with the Venetians; and that he has acted as he has done for the purpose of having an excuse with the Empire for having made terms with either the one or the other of those powers. And, finally, there are some who attribute his conduct to the reasons which I have exposed in the above copy of my previous despatch. Now whichever one of these opinions may be correct, your Lordships will examine them with your habitual prudence, and will form a more correct judgment thereupon than any one else. But you will reflect whether it be well to find yourselves without any arrangement with the Emperor in case he should succeed in one way or another satisfying his desire of making a descent into Italy. For it might well happen that his Most Christian Majesty of France, perhaps dissatisfied with everybody, would leave every one at the Emperor's discretion.

All these things your Lordships can in your wisdom judge of better than any one else, and then form your determination and give your orders accordingly.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant!*

BOTZEN, 14 February, 1508.

P. S. — I must not omit to remind your Lordships, with the utmost respect, that, in case some arrangement has to be concluded, the court here would desire that I should be commissioned to do it.

Whilst I believed that Simone had already passed Bologna, he arrived here yesterday evening, and said that he had turned back because at Pietra the Germans would not allow him to pass, as the Emperor had given strict orders not to permit any one to pass into Italy without a letter from him, so that no one should be able to give any verbal account of his preparations. As I had not been informed of these orders at the time when I despatched Simone, it did not occur to me to provide him with such a permit. However, I will endeavor to obtain an order for him to pass, and will send him back again, and will at the same time write you by him all that has occurred here since the 14th instant.

To-day is the 19th, and nothing of interest worth being reported has occurred during the past five days; particularly as we are here at Meran, away from the main road, and where we neither see nor hear anything. Still, I learn from persons that come from Botzen or Trent, that infantry and cavalry are continually passing through Trent, and that within the last five days more than three thousand infantry have passed Botzen, and more are constantly expected; and from here also some five hundred have gone. It is reported that at Landrech, a place about two days' journey from here, there are some three thousand men who are to come this way, so that matters are evidently being pushed with increased energy rather than otherwise. The Emperor is still at Brixen, and it is not known whether he will come this way or go by way of the Friuli. On the other hand, I find myself still in the same embarrassment which I have mentioned before, and which is felt by everybody here, for no one can reasonably conjecture, not alone what the end, but what even the beginning, of this enterprise is likely to be; and therefore I could have wished that this despatch could have been sent to you on wings, so as to have your reply the sooner; and that, having thus your definite instructions, I might carry them into execution with the more certainty. But the very reverse has occurred, and what grieves me most is that I have just learned that the courier Diavolaccio, who ought to have brought me your Lordships' reply to mine of the

29th, has been plundered on the way and is coming back here. Thus difficulty is heaped upon difficulty. And although I am authorized without any further instructions to offer in all fifty thousand ducats, of which twenty thousand to be paid at Trent, as before stated; yet I do not see my way clear for deciding upon this, inasmuch as you had written that I should not make this offer unless I saw that the Emperor's descent into Italy was certain.

And therefore I wrote to your Lordships not to rely upon your previous instructions, but to send me positive orders, and I now repeat this request. On the other hand, I shall continue to watch things here as carefully as possible whilst awaiting your Lordships' reply to my despatch of the 24th, or of the 8th, or the present one. But I observe that matters are being pressed, and if this enterprise should be pushed with the usual impetuousness of these Ultramontane movements, we should no longer be in time for any arrangement. Nor do I know whether our offer would now be accepted, and whether it may not prove to our disadvantage to have made it. In short, in the present state of things I have no hope of being able to do anything under the instructions I have from you; and for that reason I am so desirous, before taking another step, to have a reply at least to my despatch of the 24th, if not to the others. And if I do not receive it I shall act as God may inspire me, and as I shall believe to be for the best interests of our country; and in doing so I hope to be justified in the eyes of God and men.

MERAN, 19 February, 1508.

It is only to-day, the 23d of February, that I have obtained permission from Messer Paolo to despatch a courier, which I had hoped to do much sooner. He will leave to-morrow, but I do not know even now whether he will be allowed to pass Rovere. Not to miss any opportunity, however, I hazarded two days ago sending another letter by two vagrants who are going to Italy, in which I gave a brief summary of the state of things here, and solicited a reply to my despatch sent by Diavolaccio, reminding your Lordships, as I do again now, that without fresh instructions I shall not be able to execute the commission you sent me by Simone on the 29th, even if it should seem to me that the time for doing so had arrived; for an offer to make a payment at Trent whilst the Emperor is going through the Friuli would seem to him derogatory. And then as the Emperor evidently intends to obtain a large sum of money from you for his guaranty, it is not likely that he would accept your present offer, unless he should feel that he is weak; and in that case it would not be for your interest to make him any offer. But for the reasons given above it is impossible to judge whether he is weak or strong. It might well be, however, that he came down to accept such a sum as you offer, if for a part of it letters of exchange were in hand and the remainder could be offered him as a certainty; as I have already written that, notwithstanding his being above accepting such a sum, he might yet, on finding himself short of money, yield suddenly on seeing the ready money before him; and therefore I say, by every consideration, I ought to have fresh instructions covering every point and every possible contingency, and so drawn up that one communication may suffice, for as the roads are no longer open there can be no multiplicity of communications.

The Emperor has remained until within the past two days at Brixen, a place about two days' journey from Trent. Thence he went to Bruneck on the road to the Friuli. Here at Meran, where we now are, a thousand infantry have passed, and it is said that three thousand more are to come, who are to move on to Trent, where it is reported that ten thousand infantry and four thousand horse are to assemble; and the opinion prevails that the Emperor will make his attack upon Italy with a large force by way of the Friuli. As to the number of his troops, and where they are, and how they are to unite, it is as impossible for me to say as it would be for your Lordships to know what is going on at Naples, unless you had some one there to inform you. You must not suppose, therefore, that I can form a correct judgment of matters here; all we can do is to recommend ourselves to God in all the resolves we may form.

But what disturbs me very much is to be, as it were, in a lost island, whence I cannot get away myself, nor send any one without permission.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

MERAN, 23 February, 1508.

P. S. — I have ordered the courier Simone to take the post at Bologna, so as to get the sooner to Florence, and for this purpose have given him five ducats gold, which your Lordships will please refund to my brother Paolo.

Your servant,

FRANCESCO VETTORI.

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LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

If I believed that Simone had arrived at Florence with my despatches of the 24th, 19th, and 14th February, I should not take the trouble to answer you; but having reason to doubt it, I will repeat succinctly what has occurred here during the past month up to to-day, and also the opinions which, according to the reports and conjectures one hears, may be formed as to the results of the enterprise in question. After that I will tell you how your matters stand with the Emperor, and what conclusions we may reasonably form from his proceedings. I shall not repeat what I have written before on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of January, and the 1st of February, because I believe that those letters reached you safely, although I am still without any answer to them. I also believe that my despatch of the 8th of February sent by Ortolano has safely arrived, in which I pointed out the difficulty of watching and judging affairs here, and in which I reported how the Emperor caused Rovere to be assaulted on the 5th ultimo by the Marquis of Brandenburg with about two thousand troops, who retreated the same evening to Trent; and how the Emperor in person, with about five thousand men, went on the same day to seize the Communes on Mount Sioch in the direction of Vicenza; and how finally, whilst this was generally regarded as a most energetic movement forward, his Majesty withdrew on the 7th to Botzen, to the astonishment of everybody. After that the Emperor went to Brixen, a place about two days' journey from Trent in the direction of Innspruck, whence he afterwards moved to Bruneck, and from there took the road to the Friuli, where with about six thousand troops of the country he scoured certain valleys within the Venetian dominions for a distance of more than twenty miles. Letters were received on the 26th of February from Bruneck, of which the following is a verbatim copy. "The Emperor has taken the valley of Cadauro, through "which the road leads to Venice by the Trevisan territory; the "castle of Bustauro, which formerly belonged to the church of "Aquileja, he has left behind him; but has taken the castle of "San Martino, and some other places in the vicinity; also the "castle of Pieve, which was guarded by a gentleman who took "to flight so soon as he heard of the approach of the enemy. "He has also taken another valley, called Comoligon, which "was guarded by the Counts Saviniani. And after that he "ordered the army to advance towards the Trevisan territory," &c. Beyond this, nothing certain is known of his progress; but I have heard some persons say that the Emperor was to be at Serezino to-day, this being the 1st of March; this would be within two days of Innspruck, where it is supposed he goes to raise money on pledge of certain of his jewels.

From the direction of Trent we have no news since the Emperor's departure from there, except that some two thousand infantry and two hundred mounted men have gone from there and from Botzen. Your Lordships will see from all this what the condition of the enterprise is at the present, and how it is conducted; but no man can guess what the end of it will be, for we cannot learn clearly whether the Emperor will meet with any support in Italy. All we hear is, that the Venetians have difficulties about money, and that they are considerably alarmed; and as his Majesty two days ago despatched one of his counsellors, who was formerly his ambassador at Naples, in an unknown direction, it is surmised that he was sent on a mission to the Venetian government, at their request, for the purpose of initiating some negotiations. And it is apprehended that, if the Emperor should find means to come to terms with either the Venetians or the French, he will conclude an arrangement with them, notwithstanding that the Cardinal has received information that France has been holding back for some time. It is not known what the Pope's disposition towards the Emperor may be, but it is believed that he is somewhat irritated against him because the Cardinal has complained, that ever since leaving Memmingen up to the present the Emperor has never communicated anything to him, and that at the departure from Memmingen his Majesty had said to him in an angry manner that he would show to the whole world that he was able to make war without the help of either the Pope or the king of France. In a word, no one here ventures to express a definite opinion; for on the one hand it seems to everybody that it will be very difficult for the Emperor, without the aid of the Pope, to make head against the Venetians and France, more especially since he has begun to make war upon them in a manner so slow as to have given them courage to resist, and time for making the necessary provisions; and on the other hand the power of Germany is so great that, if she wants to do so, she is able to resuscitate an enterprise that is dead, and can more easily yet infuse energy into one that is still alive. And those who venture to guess say that the Emperor has made this movement for no other purpose than to make the Diet of the Empire furnish him fresh subsidies; for the Diet had granted him supplies for a term of six months, and had authorized five princes of the Empire to make him a further allowance for six months more in case the first should not suffice. Now it was precisely for the purpose of proving the insufficiency of the first that the Emperor made this attack.

The Cardinal had a courier from Rome yesterday, and thereupon immediately wrote a great deal, and sent the courier to the court, and on being asked by a person in authority, *Quid novi?* he replied, that he had a variety of good news which would be made known in good time; and this was all the answer that could be obtained from him.

As regards the relations of the Emperor with the powers outside of Italy, I can tell you what I have learned, having had the opportunity to hear, for we are all at leisure here. According to the ambassador from Aragon, the Emperor has not done well not to come to an understanding with his sovereign, who would have been satisfied merely to have the government of Castile assured to him, and, in case he should die without heirs, to leave all his states to his nephew, to which the Emperor would not consent; and in this the ambassador says that the Emperor did not act wisely, as his sovereign would have aided the Emperor in war and in peace. The ambassador from England has had advices since he has been here, that although the marriage with the son of the Archduke has been agreed upon, yet nothing will come of it unless his king obtains the hand of Donna Marguerita, and that the Emperor seems to put it off, showing thereby his unwillingness to consent, although the ambassador has given him to understand, that if the one is not done, the other will not take place; and that his sovereign will not make the same demonstrations which he would do if he obtained Donna Marguerita. And finally, as to the twelve Cantons, matters remain in the same condition as I have written before, and it is some time since anything has been said in relation to them. It is for your Lordships now to form your own judgment of these matters, for no one here can venture to do so; but you can do it, inasmuch as you can find out whether France is making preparations for war, or whether she is disposed to peace; and upon this point nothing can be learned here. For this reason I have written and now write again to ask your Lordships to be pleased to give me positive instructions, and to decide what course you intend to take. Your affairs here are in precisely the same condition as stated in my despatch which I sent by Diavolaccio, and to which I still await a reply. According to the indications which I notice here, I think it necessary, if you desire the guaranty and to conclude once for all with the Emperor, that you adopt one of two courses. The first is to raise the amount to be offered to one hundred thousand ducats, or even more, with the promise of making the first payment in the first Italian city not subject to the Emperor; this seems to me the most certain way. The other is for you to obligate yourselves to pay forty or fifty thousand ducats, and to pay one half cash down, for which the letters of exchange must be in hand, and to promise the other half unconditionally in three or four months. The first proposition the Emperor may be induced to accept, because of the largeness of the amount; and his necessities together with the advantage of an immediate payment may make him accept the second; but this latter would be less certain, and would involve greater risk. Your Lordships might also adopt a third plan, which would be more in accordance with the Emperor's demands; namely, to lend him a certain sum without any security, and depending solely upon his good will and discretion; for this ten or fifteen thousand ducats should suffice, although he asks for twenty thousand. One of these three plans your Lordships must adopt, according to my judgment, for the purpose of arriving at a conclusion. I say this, not because I know anything positive about it, but merely by way of conjecture; but it may well be that I deceive myself, and therefore I write you everything, so that, being fully informed, you may come to some definite determination.

I have not made the offer of a payment of twenty thousand ducats at Trent, for if no other consideration had kept me from doing so, it would have been the conviction that the payment of the twenty thousand ducats would be the only thing certain about it; for inasmuch as the Emperor counts upon obtaining a very large sum of money from your Lordships, he certainly would not accept twenty thousand ducats unless he felt himself extremely weak, and in that case there would be no occasion to pay him anything. Moreover, to offer the payment to be made at Trent whilst the Emperor is not there, and has probably no intention of going there, but will go by an entirely different route, would naturally cause him to look upon that offer as a mere mockery. And therefore I repeat to your Lordships that I must have fresh instructions, carefully prepared so as to cover every point and contingency, so that I may not have to ask again for further orders; for, the roads being closed, our correspondence is necessarily restricted; and meanwhile time passes and a month's delay may be of great importance, for the Emperor must now promptly satisfy his desire to go into Italy, either by means of some agreement, or by a war carried on differently from what has been done hitherto, or he will become the laughing-stock of the whole world.

The whole of this letter, with slight exception, is little more in substance than what I have written you by Simone. I will endeavor to send it off if possible; for amongst my other annoyances there are two that nearly kill me, namely, to be away from the court, and the impossibility of either sending to or receiving letters from your Lordships.

I wonder much that I have no reply to my despatch sent by Diavolaccio, although I heard that he had been plundered on his return; still, as letters have been received here since then from Sienna, and even from Rome, I cannot understand why I have none from your Lordships. And as you have always said that it was the Venetians who wished to usurp the liberties of Italy, and as the Emperor has now made open war upon them, he will think that you intended to pay him with promises when he sees that you are delaying your answer. I therefore repeat again that it is essential you should write and send me fresh powers, with definite instructions as to what I ought to do.

And if you still entertain the idea of paying him money, then you must send me letters of exchange, which, as I have written before, can be had through the Fuggers in Rome. Your Lordships must not think that your instructions of the 29th of January can be of the least use; for, as I have written before, they are applicable only at Trent, and in case I should see clearly that the Emperor's enterprise is being pushed successfully. But in that case the Emperor would certainly not accept that proposition, particularly as it is not accompanied with ready money. And even if I were to offer to pay him at Trent in cash, yet the money would not really be there, and I could only give him bills of exchange, which would require at least a month's time before the money would be paid on them, and therefore nothing can be done upon the basis of your instructions of the 29th of January.

To-day is the 7th of March, and the Emperor is at Innspruck. Three days ago the Legate received news from the court that the deputies of the Empire had very readily extended the subsidies to the Emperor for another term of six months, at which his Majesty has shown himself much pleased, and was preparing to send off letters to that effect. This is all we hear of him; but it is supposed that he will be here within six or eight days, and then go wherever it may seem good to him. The troops that were at Trent, some nine thousand infantry and cavalry, went two days ago in camp at Castel Barco, a place opposite Rovere, on the other side of the Adige, and on the right in going from here into Italy, Roveredo being on the left. The place surrendered at discretion in three days, whilst the imperial forces were waiting for artillery; the garrison, consisting of forty men, are still prisoners. Nothing has been heard since as to whether the army has moved forward; some say that it will march upon Castel Brettonico, on the same side of the river; others say that it will march upon Roveredo, the garrison of which place is said to consist of fifteen hundred Spaniards. This is all we have heard from that direction, nor have we any news from the army in the Trevisan territory; or from any other direction whatever, except that within the month eighty artillery wagons have gone from Trent in the direction of Roveredo, and two wagons loaded with chains for the construction of bridges. Of the Emperor's negotiations we hear nothing; I have been told, however, that the Cantons furnish twenty-five hundred men to France, and the individual who told me this said that Lang had not denied it, but had said that the Emperor would also have Swiss troops. Upon these points your Lordships can obtain much more reliable information by way of Lombardy, as also in relation to all other negotiations which the Emperor may be carrying on either with France or the Pope. And thus you will be able to form a better judgment upon all these points than what can be done from here.

Servitor

FRANCISCUS VICTORIUS,
Ambassador.

MERAN, 7 March, 1508.

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LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Your Lordships will find annexed to this a report of all that has taken place here from the 24th of February until the 7th of March; and although there are some things in that statement which I might now have passed over in silence, or curtailed, yet I send it as it was written, so that your Lordships may know step by step how matters have been regarded here, and thus form a better judgment of them. You will also know the changes they have passed through, and will therefore have compassion with those who have had to express an opinion about them. I had written that report on the morning of the 7th, in the expectation of sending it to you by a person from Rome, who afterwards declined to take it. Later on the same day, at the twenty-second hour, the Governor of the Tyrol made known to all the ambassadors that he desired to confer with them, on behalf of the Emperor, at the house of the Aragonese ambassador. Having met him there as appointed, he presented a letter of credence from the Emperor, and then said that the Emperor, having heard that the Swiss had declared in favor of France and had sent some six thousand troops there already, had therefore resolved to declare war against them. But wishing first to confer with the Legate and the other ambassadors upon certain points, he desired that the Legate and ourselves should come to meet him for that purpose at Innspruck by way of Brixen. We replied, that we were disposed to obey the Emperor's request, and would consult with the Legate about it. We went after that to see the Legate, who was quite perplexed and disinclined to make this trip, and finally begged us to postpone the matter until the next Monday, saying that he would in the mean time send a confidential agent to the Emperor to notify him of the time when he would start with us, and at the same time make our excuses to him. But I believe that he did all this merely to see whether he could not get off from going to Innspruck.

We conformed to the Legate's request, and on Monday, which was the 13th, we started from Meran. On the road, we heard that that portion of the Emperor's army which had gone towards Roveredo had made no progress, but had stopped at Petra; whilst the other part, which had gone towards the Trevisan territory, had even done less, and that some thirteen hundred of the infantry, under command of a reckless captain, had been betrayed by some of the people of the country to enter into a certain valley in hopes of plunder, where they were assailed with stones from above, and surrounded by about six thousand Venetian horse and foot; and that only about three hundred had escaped with their lives, but afterwards surrendered, whilst all the rest were killed. This disaster has caused great irritation throughout all Germany against Italy, and more especially against the Venetians. The priest Lucas, whom I have mentioned as having gone to Venice, has returned, having been ordered away from there on the receipt of the news of that victory. It is reported that the only remark the Emperor made when he heard of this loss was, that "it "served them right to be killed for going where they ought "not to have gone." But to prevent any further disasters to that portion of his army, he immediately sent the Duke of Brunswick there, who is highly reputed as a military man.

Before our departure from Meran the Legate received a letter informing him that the Emperor had left Innspruck for Suabia, for the purpose of convoking a Diet, and to stir up the Suabians against the Swiss, and that the coadjutor of Brixen would communicate to the Legate the commands of the Emperor. And so we arrived here yesterday together with the Legate; but nothing was communicated to him by the coadjutor, who said that he had received no orders of any kind. On the road, we learned by letters to the Legate, not from the Emperor, but from a Lombard exile, that the report of the Swiss having declared against the Emperor was not true, and that only a few thousand, without authority from the Cantons, had taken service in France ; in consequence of which the government of the Cantons had seized the French ambassador, and would not release him until all the Swiss who had taken service in France were first returned to them. This Lombard exile mentioned furthermore, that the Grisons had beheaded certain agents who had distributed money on the part of France amongst the people of the country ; and that the Emperor had convoked the Diet in Suabia, not for the purpose of having them declare against the Swiss, but against the Venetians, and to have them vote, besides the regular supplies to the Emperor, certain extraordinary subsidies.

Your Lordships must now form your own judgment as to which of these statements are true. The Legate had a letter this morning from Messer Mariano, Auditor of the Rota, whom he had sent from Meran to the Emperor, informing him that the Emperor was at Cospain, and had called the Diet to meet at Ulm, one of the chief cities of Suabia, four days' journey from here ; that the Diet was to open on Sunday next, and that there would be present ambassadors from the Suabian League, also from Switzerland, and a number of princes, and particularly those who had been charged by the Diet of Constanz to extend the supplies to the Emperor for an additional six months ; and that the Emperor desired that the Legate and the other ambassadors should also go there, if it were not too much trouble for them. The Legate has not yet decided what to do, but will do so to-day, and I will inform you of his decision before closing this letter. We hear, as I have already mentioned above, that the disaster inflicted by the Venetians upon the German troops has caused a general irritation in Germany, and that they will promptly decide upon sending help, and that in consequence the demands of the Emperor have been considerably increased. On the road from Botzen here we met several hundred men-at-arms and six hundred infantry, and a number of wagons loaded with lances, swords, provisions, and munitions of war. This is all the information I can give you as to the state of things here up to this day, the 19th ; and thus your Lordships know as much about it as I do myself.

The Courier Baccino arrived here on the 7th at two o'clock at night, and brought me a short letter from your Lordships of the 19th ultimo, which however contains no answer to my despatch sent by Diavolaccio, but refers me upon all points to yours of the 29th January, adding merely that I may at my discretion offer to raise the first payment to twenty-five thousand ducats; but that I am to do so only if in my judgment the chances of the Emperor's descent into Italy are three out of four. I cannot do otherwise in this business than to conform to your Lordships' will and pleasure, and to bear the burden imposed upon me the best way I can. But as your Lordships say that I shall make the offer only if I believe that the Emperor will carry his project into execution, I say now that I believe the chances are more than ever that he will attempt the passage again, and with a larger force than before; but whether he will be successful or not, remains to be seen; and whether he abandons the attempt or fails in it, that will really be the same to your Lordships after you have once shown your hand. Now to form a judgment as to whether the Emperor will succeed or not is the more difficult for me, as I know nothing of the strength of the Venetians, nor of the preparations of the French, of which your Lordships give me no information in any of your letters. Having to judge of this at a distance, I can but conclude that the Venetians are very strong, for I see that of the Emperor's two armies, each of which was composed of from six to seven thousand men, the one has been defeated and the other held in check. Thus what force must we suppose the Emperor would need to enable him to beat the Venetians and the French together? Still, if I knew what is being done in the Milanese, and what preparations have been made there; and on which side the French are going to place themselves, what troops the Venetians have, and whether they are able to bear the expense; and finally, if I knew whether the French and Venetians will unite their forces for the defence of Italy, — then I might boldly form an opinion, and with less fear of making a mistake. But as it is, I can only recommend myself to God, and hope that your Lordships will believe that whatever I may do is done with the best intentions, and in the hope that it may prove to be for the best.

It might also be, as I have said in a previous despatch, that without any apparent preparations a peaceable arrangement might suddenly be concluded, of which no one had any previous knowledge. Indeed, I have heard within the past two days that the Emperor, moved by his hatred against the Venetians, shows himself inclined to treat with France, in which he is encouraged both by the Legate and the Aragonese ambassador. And it is even said that the Legate, at the request of the Emperor, has already written to France on the subject, and that there is but one serious difficulty, namely, that France does not know with what sort of a conscience she can abandon the Venetians; and to enable her to do so with some color of pretext, the Legate has suggested that the king of France should call a council at Lyons, at which he should declare to the Venetians that, if they will furnish him an extraordinary subsidy of six hundred thousand ducats, he will not only defend the Milanese, but make war upon and beat all Germany with honor and advantage to his crown. But if they will not furnish him that sum, then he would be obliged to abandon the Venetians and make peace for himself. It is supposed that the two sovereigns would prefer peace at the expense of others, to war at their own cost, even with the hope of some gain; and therefore it seems likely that France will in some way be obliged to abandon the Venetians, and leave them to clamor against her. Your Lordships will learn by way of Lyons whether all this is true or a mere invention; I have written it just as it was told me, and as a secret. Those who pretend to judge of these matters believe that the Emperor would rather satisfy his desire of going to Rome being at peace with France than at war. Should your Lordships hear anything more in relation to these matters, you will know what course to take under the circumstances; as for myself, I must repeat that I shall know nothing certain about it until after the event.

To return now to the offer which your Lordships have authorized me to make, etc., I repeat that I still see the same difficulties which I have explained in the annexed despatch; and which are, first, to have to confer with the Emperor at Trent, where he may not be willing to return, preferring probably some other route; and secondly, because I could not make the first payment promptly, having no bills of exchange in hand, nor even the power definitely to conclude an arrangement; and finally because I can give no certain assurances as to the payment of the remainder. Moreover, as I have already written, I regard this offer as altogether to the Emperor's advantage, and not at all to yours; for if he feels himself strong he will decline it, for he expects a great deal more from you; and should he feel that he is feeble, then he will accept, to your prejudice. And if you should wait until he is strong, then you will be no longer in time with your offer. But it is impossible correctly to anticipate all this.

The Diet will certainly convene, and I shall take counsel from its conclusions and from what I shall hear and see from day to day. If the Cardinal goes to the Diet, I shall send Machiavelli along with him, as I am prevented from going myself, having been seized with so acute a pain in one of my arms that it prevents my riding on horseback. And therefore I beg your Lordships to grant me leave to return to Florence, so that I may subject myself to a lengthy and regular cure, should it be necessary. If, however, I find myself able to ride in a few days, I shall not fail to go to the court. I have given Machiavelli orders to go, and closely to watch the proceedings of the Diet and to report to me fully, so that I may direct him what to do, and afterwards inform your Lordships of everything. It is understood that the Emperor has three objects in view in convoking this Diet; first, to settle matters once for all with the Swiss if possible; secondly, to have the Empire accord to him the additional six months' supplies, unless perchance this should already have been done; and finally to obtain from the Suabian League something more than ordinary; all of which we shall know better as we hear from day to day how things are going.

I have kept this letter back until to-day, for I wanted to see what the Cardinal would decide about going to the court, as he had written there the other day to ascertain whether he could be excused from the trouble of going. But as he has not yet received a reply to that letter, I have thought it best no longer to delay despatching Baccino, to whom I have given eleven ducats gold, ten of which are for his return, and one for having sent him from Meran here to find out from Giovanni Rustichi the whereabouts of the Emperor. I have given this money to Baccino because he seems to me to deserve it better than any other of your couriers; for during the past six weeks he is the only one that has come from Italy. Your Lordships will please reimburse this amount to my brother Paolo.

We have news here of the death of the Count Palatine, who leaves four sons. Yesterday evening the Legate told me that three of the Swiss Cantons had accepted a sum of eight thousand ducats as earnest money from the Emperor for eight thousand infantry; and that the Diet will under any circumstances arrange to have the other Cantons recall such of their infantry as have taken service in France. These reports about the Swiss seem to me confused, and no doubt they will appear the same to your Lordships; for I cannot understand how three of the Cantons can send eight thousand infantry out of the country, or how three Cantons can decide one thing, whilst the others want something quite different. Nor can I see how six thousand men could have been raised without permission of the Communes, and that the Communes should not have heard of it in time to have prevented it.

With the exception of my arm, I am well, thank God.

The Marquis of Brandenburg passed through here two days ago on his way to be present at the Diet; he came from Trent, where he commanded the army, and has left his son Casimir to take his place for the time.

Servitor

FRANCESCO VETTORI.

INNSPRUCK, 22 March, 1508.

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LETTER X.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

On the 22d I wrote very fully to your Lordships upon various matters, and sent the letter by Baccini. Amongst other things I mentioned our departure from Meran to Innspruck by order of the Emperor, in consequence, it was said, of the Swiss having declared in favor of France; and that before our arrival at Innspruck the Emperor had gone to Suabia to hold a Diet for the purpose of stirring up the Suabian League against the Swiss; but that afterwards it was said to be against the Venetians, because the Swiss had resolved to support the Emperor. I mentioned also several other things in that despatch, of which I send full duplicate to-day by the same German courier by whom your Lordships sent me your last letters of the

4th instant. I write now briefly, and annex another copy of my previous despatch, and send it by Messer Paolo Lichtenstein, who has so requested me. This Messer Paolo is one of the three persons nearest to the Emperor; he sent for me at Innspruck and came to see me here at Botzen, and told me that the Emperor, being occupied with the Diet, had commissioned him to bring matters to a point with you; that he desired not only to satisfy his sovereign, but also to be agreeable to your Lordships; and knowing the position in which you are, namely, that you feared the Emperor, the king of France, and the Venetians, because you were not able alone to defend yourselves against either of these three powers, you could not do better than to make terms with the Emperor, who could defend you with arms in case of war, and in case of peace could secure you by treaties; and therefore he requested me to tell him what it was that you had asked of the Emperor when you made him your late offer.

Having replied to this, he said: "I believe it would be well "that the Emperor should accord to you his guaranty, and "that in return you should pay him sixty thousand ducats in "three payments; the first, cash down upon the conclusion of "the agreement; the second, in Italy, in two months after the "first; and the third payment also in Italy, in two months after "the second. That this seemed to him a reasonable arrange-"ment, to which his sovereign and your Lordships ought to "accede; that he would so write to the Emperor, whilst I "should write to your Lordships." I replied that this proposition involved three serious objections; the first, that the sum named was too large; the second, that the payments were too near together; and the third, that no place was fixed for the first cash payment, an objection which I have already explained in previous despatches. Messer Paolo made no further reply, but only asked me to write to you by three or four different routes, and said that he would aid me in sending the letters, the expense of which I was to bear. I insisted nevertheless in objecting to the payments being so near together, as well as to the other points, but could not obtain any modification of the terms except an extension of one month on the last payment. To enable him to report more precisely to the Emperor, as well as to avoid all misunderstandings, Messer Paolo asked me for a written memorandum of what I wanted, which I prepared for him; and I now enclose a copy of the same, in which our respective demands are stated, and to which I added, besides what my instructions called for, that, in case of the Emperor's concluding a peace with any other power, he was to provide for the safety of our Republic.

In coming back here from Innspruck I met the German courier with your Lordships' letter of 4th March, from which I see that you enlarge my powers. But although the demands made by Messer Paolo on behalf of the Emperor are perhaps less onerous than what you authorize me to concede, yet as there was a difference as regards the time of making the payments, and as I could not induce him to yield that point, I could not conclude an arrangement with him. Your Lordships will please now to examine the whole subject, and reply to me definitely, for you know the state of things here now as fully as I do. I must also briefly inform you that in the direction of Roveredo there are not less than eight thousand, and not more than ten thousand troops, of which some two thousand are mounted men ; and in the direction of Treviso there are not less than four thousand nor more than six thousand. What other troops may yet be expected there I cannot say for certain. A little while ago it was said that a considerable number of horse were expected from Austria, and two thousand infantry from Bohemia, but as yet nothing has been seen of them. Respecting the Swiss, the reports are confused ; some say that those who went to Milan to serve the king of France have returned, others deny this report.

Nothing can be known yet as to what will be done by the Diet, which was to open on Sunday last. True, it is reported to have been convoked particularly for three objects : the first, to come to some definite terms with the Swiss, ambassadors from three of the Cantons having already arrived ; secondly, to extend the supplies of the Empire for another six months ; and thirdly, to induce the Suabian League to concur in this war by extraordinary contributions. I do not think it will be possible to know what the Swiss will do ; as to the supplies to the Empire, I do not believe there will be any difficulty ; and as to the support of Suabia against the Swiss, that was already had during the eight months of the last war, and for this purpose they keep seven thousand men constantly under arms. What they will now do, and whether they will have more consideration for the Venetians than for the Swiss, on account of their commercial interests, that is not known; and even after the conclusion of the Diet it will be difficult to know the truth about this. As already mentioned, the Count Palatine is dead, and so is the Duke Albert of Bavaria, which is regarded as rather favorable to the Emperor's enterprise than otherwise.

This much as regards the war. Now as to peace, especially with his Most Christian Majesty of France, that is favored by the kings of both Spain and of England, and perhaps also by the Pope; and the Legate says he has already written about it to the king of France. A few days since there arrived from Lombardy, or perhaps from France, a certain Messer Niccolo Frigio, whom the Legate had sent there for that purpose by order of the Emperor, but it is not known what he brings. It may also well be that some negotiations have been opened with the Venetians; for a certain priest Lucas has been several times in that direction. As to the relations of the other Italian powers with the Emperor, we only know that up to the present the Pope has confined himself merely to good words, and it is not likely that he will do more unless he should see somewhat more progress made by the Emperor. Nor has Ferrara given anything thus far, and for a long time the Duke did not even reply to his ambassador; I suppose that, inasmuch as he has plenty of money, he would rather wait and see a little more progress made, even at the risk of its costing him somewhat more later to make terms with the Emperor, so as to be relieved of apprehensions as to the king of France and the Venetians. I learn from a good source, that the Marquis of Mantua will declare for the Emperor whenever he can do so with safety to himself. So far as is known, the Lucchese have never sent any ambassador to the Emperor. The Siennese alone have given him any money, and the term of the second payment is running on.

Your Lordships can now take all these different speculations as to peace and war into consideration, and then determine what course to adopt, particularly as you are informed with regard to the preparations made by France and Venice, respecting which I am entirely in the dark; for ever since Machiavelli's arrival here I have heard nothing on the subject, either by letters from your Lordships, or in any other way. You can also ascertain whether it is true that the Swiss who went to Lombardy to serve the king of France have returned from there, as has been reported, which in the event of war would insure the Emperor's success. You will also bear in mind how easily his Most Christian Majesty and the Venetians may be disposed to peace rather than to war, seeing the unfavorable conditions to which a war with the Emperor would expose them, being constantly obliged to think of defending themselves at the expense of much treasure, without being able in turn to attack him because of the nature of the country and the Emperor's adherents; so that, even if the Emperor's affairs were very low, he might still be able to obtain honorable terms of peace from them. After having well weighed all these points, your Lordships will, I trust, reply, and instruct me what to do, whether matters remain in the same condition as at present, or whether they have changed either for better or worse. I beg you will also instruct me whether I am to act in the same way, if I learn that peace is to be made, as when I see them resolved upon war; or whether I am to act differently in either one or the other of these supposed cases. And if your Lordships are decided upon making terms, then I beg that you will not fail to send me promptly and at length the points to be stipulated, and especially those that are for your advantage. This you might communicate to me in cipher, underlining all those words which on no consideration you would have changed. In fact you might send the whole in cipher, with a blank signed by the notary before whom the ciphered communication has been written; and the deciphered despatch could afterwards be written on the blank. Your Lordships will please also think of promptly expediting the money for the first payment, without which nothing can be concluded; in fact, one day's delay might spoil everything. By adopting the above plan I could easily conceal the cash payment under the agreement, as your Lordships charge me to do in your last letter. No other way of making the payments will be as acceptable to them here as to have them made through the Fuggers, and for this purpose you will have to arrange yourselves with the Fuggers in such manner as may seem best to you.

I must furthermore beg that in your answer to this you will instruct me, in case you deem it best not to conclude an arrangement with the Emperor, what I am to say to keep him satisfied and gain time; for it will not be possible to conceal from him the arrival of your messenger; and as it will be necessary to tell him something, I would like to have your orders upon that point. Please also inform me what you understand by the words "in Italy," in connection with the proposed terms above mentioned.

Your Lordships will please note that the demands made by Messer Paolo were not made by order of the Emperor, but emanated solely from him, inasmuch as he has power only to negotiate, but not to conclude anything definitely. This results probably from the fact that they imagine here that by gaining time they can shape matters to their own advantage; and that is also your Lordships' position in the matter.

Your servant,

FRANCESCO VETTORI.

BOTZEN, 29 March.

LETTER XI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

On the 22d of March I wrote to your Lordships by Baccino, reporting at length all that had taken place since the 24th of February up to the day of my writing. I sent a partial copy of it by the German courier Iocoso, who brought me your letter of the 4th of March. By the same despatch I informed you of the demands made by Messer Paolo de Lichtenstein, and sent three copies of it by way of Venice, Milan, and Trieste. Since then, on the 1st instant, I received a despatch from Mirandola by the hands of Simone, together with a copy of your letter of the 4th and your plenary powers. Your Lordships have reason to be well satisfied with this Simone, who has really served you well. I did not give this messenger any letters in return, as he was on his way to the court, whence he has not yet returned. Although I sent copies of my despatch of the 29th ultimo by four different routes, yet I send you still another by way of extra precaution. Yesterday Piero Borgo arrived with your letter of the 17th ultimo, in which you ask to be informed upon two principal points, namely, what progress the Emperor has made with his preparations for war, and what is the state of his peace negotiations. Upon both these points you will have been entirely satisfied if you have received my letter; and in case it should not have reached you, the annexed copy will give you in great part the desired information.

Respecting events here since then I have to report, that the army, which is at Caliano in the direction of Roveredo, attacked a body of some three thousand Venetian infantry who were guarding a mountain called Brettonico, under command of Jacopo Corso, Dionisio di Naldo, and Vitello Vitelli. They had fortified themselves well in their position; still, on arrival of the Germans they fled precipitately to their intrenchments, and after burning a number of houses on the mountain they withdrew the same evening to their camp. After this the Bishop of Trent conceived the idea of attacking Riva, a castle belonging to the Venetians, and situated on the Lago di Garda. He sat down before the place first with about two thousand men under his command, and then so urged the council that they consented to send him artillery and one half of the troops from Caliano. They had been about five days before Riva, and just as orders had been given to establish batteries, two thousand Grisons, who formed a part of this force, began to say that, although they had been promised four and a half .... per month, they had not received more than four; and they conducted themselves so badly about the provisions that the siege had to be raised with but little credit. A portion of the troops returned to Caliano, and a portion is here; of the Grisons only about five hundred have remained, the rest have gone home. The army has been greatly enfeebled by this affair, so that I believe there are but little over seven thousand men left.

After the camp before Riva was broken up, the Venetians burnt some villas in the neighborhood; and whilst a body of some three thousand of them were about to attack and burn a villa belonging to the Comte di Agresto on the 13th instant, about three hundred of the country people fell upon the Venetians and put them to flight, having captured and killed more than a hundred of them; being altogether a most discreditable affair for the Venetians. It is reported also that the Duke of Brunswick has killed some three hundred Venetians in the valley of the Cadore towards the Trevisan territory; but the scene of action being at so great a distance I cannot vouch for the truth of this. Moreover, it is said that a large force of Venetians, having gone to attack Fiume, a place on the seacoast belonging to the Emperor, were repulsed by the people of the country and some mounted men who happened to be there, and that over a thousand of the Venetians were slain. Thus much as regards the way in which the war is being carried on; in the annexed copy of my preceding despatch you will find an account of the number of troops engaged. Respecting the negotiations I cannot yet report anything more than what I have already said in my previous letter; for the Diet has not yet closed its labors, and the Emperor is at Ulm. As the course of the Swiss is of great importance in this enterprise, I would observe that you can obtain more reliable information upon that point than I can furnish from here; for you can ascertain whether those who went to Lombardy continue in the service of the king of France, or whether they are leaving there. It is said here that the Communes were greatly dissatisfied on account of this, and that, if these men do not immediately leave the French service, it might happen to his Most Christian Majesty as it did to the Duke of Milan, namely, that they will abandon him at the moment of going into action. But we must wait and see the end, for it is also reported, as I have already written, that three of the Cantons have furnished eight thousand men to the Emperor; and so it might well happen that there are Swiss on both sides, and that both parties may suffer in consequence.

Nothing has as yet been heard as to the league of which your Lordships speak; but I repeat that England, Aragon, and the Legate greatly desire peace with the king of France, but that the Emperor is not much disposed that way, but is inclined rather to make terms with the Venetians. About the beginning of March he sent the priest Lucas to them, who returned on the 12th, and the Emperor then sent him back to Trent with orders to wait there for further instructions, and about a week ago he went again to Venice. It is not known what negotiations are being carried on, but, on leaving, Lucas told me that we should hear some important news within twenty days. Some persons think that, if the Venetians really desire to come to terms with the Emperor, they will find no difficulty in doing so. But it is not known whether the princes who desire peace with the king of France would be satisfied in such event, and whether the Emperor may not find himself weaker after coming to an agreement with the Venetians than before; which has perhaps kept the Venetians back until now, a point which your Lordships will not fail to consider. Nor can anything positive be known respecting the negotiations until the close of the Diet; and even then, to know the truth, it may be necessary to see some beginning of the execution of the resolves of the Diet.

It is said that the Duke of Brunswick, brother to the one who is with the army in the Trevisan territory, is coming here with one thousand horse; and the German courier who brought me yours of the 17th says that he had met about two hundred of them on the road; but everything is magnified here according to people's opinions and hopes. After all, what we see here is just what I have written, and now repeat to your Lordships; and no one can gainsay the opinion that in reality Germany can do a great deal, and only needs the will to do it, and that will she may exercise at any hour, and therefore no one can safely form an opinion as to what will be done. On the other hand, we see that a considerable time has passed without Germany's displaying her will, and for that reason no one can say whether she ever will do it; and yet it is evident that her honor demands more than ever that she should. And thus none but the Almighty knows how it will all terminate.

I am here at the request of Messer Paolo de Lichtenstein, and will endeavor if possible to go to the court in a few days. Meantime, I beg your Lordships to be pleased to reply promptly to the demands of Messer Paolo, bearing in mind that these matters cannot be weighed exactly as in a balance, and without a reply from you I cannot act; I also beg to remind you once more, that without the money in hand nothing will ever be concluded here.

Luca da Monte Varchi, who has been commander in your service, has come here from the camp of the Venetians, and reports their infantry as most wretched, and that it will surely prove so if ever put into the field; as in fact we have already seen, for in every encounter they have come off losers. It is reported here to-day, and the news comes direct from the council, that Genoa has revolted, and that the French are shut up in the fortresses. If this be true, it will render the Emperor's success still more easy and assured, and your republic may possibly find that his views will be materially changed from the propositions of Messer Paolo. But your Lordships ought to know the exact truth of the matter. *Valete!*

Your servant,

FRANCESCO DE VETTORI.

TRENT, 16 April, 1508.

LETTER XII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC: —

My last of the 16th of April, which I sent by Piero, the son of the German Giovanni, will have informed you of all that has occurred here since the 19th of March to the date of that letter. I shall not reiterate it now, as it really amounted to nothing of importance. Since then the Germans have raised the siege of Riva, about which I wrote you in my last; their infantry are pretty much disbanded, and their cavalry, numbering about twelve hundred, and which really never amounted to more although their number had been greatly exaggerated, have returned here. Thereupon the Venetians attempted on Easter morning to sieze Pietra, a place about six miles from here, thinking they could take it by assault, and having perhaps an understanding with persons within the place. But the Germans came to the rescue with some mounted men and about twenty-five hundred infantry that had remained, and obliged the Venetians to withdraw. The Germans have endeavored to raise fresh infantry since then, and on the 10th instant they had already some six thousand together.

Subsequently the Venetians attacked the castle of Cresta, which commands a most important pass. The Germans went to the assistance of the place, but arrived too late, the lord of the place having already surrendered it. The Germans thereupon moved their camp to Caliano, a burgh about a bowshot's distance from Pietra; their force consisting of about six to seven thousand infantry, and about one thousand horse; the troops of the Duke of Würtemberg, numbering about two hundred effective horse, having returned home at the beginning of the month. The Venetians, anxious to have Pietra, established their army, consisting of about four thousand effective horse and over sixteen thousand infantry, about a quarter of a mile from the place, and began a siege of the place by planting batteries of sixteen pieces of artillery. This fortress of Pietra is situated at the foot of a mountain on the right in coming from Roveredo here. A very strong wall runs out from the fortress to the length of about a bowshot, to the river Adige; half-way down there is a gate in this wall, through which persons may pass. It is alike difficult and dangerous to attack Trent without having first secured this pass; and therefore the Venetians employed their entire force in the attempt. The armies were about a mile distant from each other, each having the fortress and the wall in front of them, with the Adige on the one hand and the mountain on the other, and in the rear their respective places of retreat. But as the Germans were masters of the fortress, as well as of the wall, the Venetians found themselves in a position where they could not avoid an engagement, if the Germans were disposed to give them battle; which nothing prevented them from doing except their lack of sufficient cavalry; for of the infantry they made but little account. The Venetians opened a heavy fire of artillery upon the Germans, killing a good many; but finally the Germans attacked the guard that was protecting the Venetian artillery, routed them, and captured two of their guns and disabled the others, whereupon the Venetians broke up their camp, and retired to Roveredo, where they are still on this 20th of May.

So soon as the German infantry perceived that the Venetians had retreated, they began themselves to disband, so that persons coming from there report that not more than three thousand infantry were left at Caliano; and that besides the Duke of Brunswick's cavalry, which had already gone home, that of Saxony, Nuremberg, Ulm, and that of a number of smaller lords having from eight to ten horses each, all went home, so that the Germans have to-day full six hundred mounted men less than what they had before. Such is the result of military operations here; but your Lordships must know that in the Friuli the Venetians have taken Goritz, Pardanone, Trieste, — in a word, all the places in that district belonging to the Emperor, who really never had sufficient troops there to offer any serious resistance to an enemy. In truth, he never had there more than four hundred horse, and some four to five thousand infantry, that had been sent there by Austria and Carinthia, and who after remaining a couple of days went away again for want of money. It is in this wise and with such forces that the war is being carried on here.

Now as to the negotiations, and more particularly the proceedings of the Suabian Diet. The Emperor assembled the chiefs at Ulm on the third or fourth Sunday of Lent, and laid his necessities before them, as already written. These chiefs were to return home and submit the matter to their constituents, and then to come back here and report their decisions on the eighth day after Easter. This day is now past, but it is not known what has been done, nor where the Emperor is at this time; some say that he has gone to Cologne to attend the creation of a new bishop, the old one having died, but I cannot aver this positively. Others say that he has gone to Mayence to settle some differences that have arisen between the Archbishop there and the Landgrave of Hesse respecting their boundaries. Others again say that he has gone to the duchy of Guelders to compose matters there, and some maintain that he has gone to Calais to meet the king of England in relation to the marriage of Madame Marguerite, and to borrow money from that sovereign on a pledge of certain jewels.

I came here at the request of Messer Paolo de Lichtenstein, after he had made the proposition which I communicated to you. Not receiving any answer thereto from your Lordships, I wanted to leave here, or at any rate send Machiavelli home, but was not permitted to do either. This, however, did not prevent my using every effort to find out what was going on at Ulm, and I therefore sent Baccino there. I had previously sent another messenger to a friend of mine at the place where the Cardinal is, and which friend is in the habit of writing to me all that I could learn if I were on the spot myself. I am in hourly expectation of a reply from him, and should it come in time I will communicate it to you. As things are, and being obliged to be either here at Trent or at Ulm, I do not deem it at all unfortunate that I should happen to be here rather than there; for being here I have not been obliged to depend upon others for information respecting certain important matters, having witnessed them myself, whilst, if I had not been here, I should never have heard the truth upon certain points, and upon others I should have heard a thousand lies. I think that I fully understand the resolutions of the Diet, for, seeing the Imperial troops all returning home at the expiration of their six months' term of service, the natural inference is that the Diet has refused the Emperor an extension of supplies for another six months; a matter which I should have supposed could easily have been obtained, and which nevertheless has not been accomplished. Thus, according to what we see, the burden of this war falls mainly upon the shoulders of the county of Tyrol; for with the exception of the cavalry, all the troops have been raised and supplied by the localities that have sent them. And as the Friuli has not such rich and amiable neighbors, it has remained undefended, for it is said that Austria has never been willing to send a single man there. It is in this feeble way that matters here are conducted thus far; and should any one from inclination or from want of faith in my statements think differently, then let him come himself, or send some one in whom he has faith, and if what he sees seems to him wise and good, then I will take back all I have written too strongly.

The chiefs of the Tyrol assembled about ten days since at Botzen, for the purpose of extending for three months more the supplies for ten thousand infantry for the defence of their country, as was decided in January last, when the Emperor was there. These chiefs are still together. The Swiss also sent an envoy to this council, about ten days ago, to ask for money, saying that they were ready to put eight or ten thousand men into the field, wherever the Emperor might require them. This envoy was sent to Botzen to this Diet, which he was told would not only provide the money for the ten thousand men, but would also pay the Swiss for three months' service. It was said that the Diet was disposed to do everything that was asked and that the country was able to do; but that before taking any resolutions about it they wanted to know whether the negotiations for a truce with Venice were progressing. You must know, also, that four days ago a secretary from Venice came here to the councillors, and left again the next morning with the Bishop in the direction of Riva, there to confer with a Venetian Proveditore in relation to this truce; and yesterday evening it was reported here that the Venetians asked that the truce should hold for five years, whilst the Emperor wanted it only for four months. The former have taken until next Thursday to make their definite answer. Should I learn anything more about it before sending this off, I will not fail to inform you of it.

On the last day of the past month I received through the hands of Messer Paolo your letter of the 15th, informing me of the receipt of mine of the 29th of March. Seeing that Messer Paolo was displeased because you had not resolved upon anything definite, I made full excuse for your Lordships' delay.

Since then Baccino arrived, on the 6th, bringing me yours of the 12th ultimo, which needs no particular reply, as it contains nothing but information, for which I am much obliged to your Lordships. Yesterday I received at the same moment, through Ortolano and Giovanni della Spada, both your letters of the 19th, but retained until the 26th; and with them the plenary powers, of which a copy had already been forwarded to me by Simone from Mirandola. I have carefully read all you write in reply to Messer Paolo's proposition, and note that your Lordships desire me to conclude the matter in conformity with the demand, provided I should not be able to obtain better terms, and that in my judgment the Emperor would carry out his intended descent into Italy despite of the will of either of his opponents. As this matter seems now to be left to my judgment, I have thought best not to conclude it; and this decision is based, not so much upon my own opinion as upon that of your Lordships. For when I communicated in my letter of the 29th the demands made by Messer Paolo, I explained to you at the same time fully and in detail the actual condition of things here; and therefore I believe that, if it had seemed to you that under these circumstances an arrangement should be concluded on the basis of those demands, your Lordships would have so instructed me distinctly. And if it did not seem to you then that matters were in a better condition, it certainly does not appear to me so now, since the aspect of things has become rather worse; and I am sure your Lordships will think the same after reading what I have written above of the state of things here. Nor do I think that the Tyrol, which until now has mainly borne the brunt of this war, will be strong enough to carry the Emperor into Italy in opposition to the will of France and Venice; or that Germany will furnish him fresh support, when at this very time she withdraws that which she has furnished hitherto. Should it be observed that Germany is powerful and capable of great things at any time, then I reply that your Lordships know the power of Germany fully as well as I do; and if you had intended to stop at this consideration, you would have given me positive instructions to conclude the arrangement with Messer Paolo. But as you want me in this matter to be governed by things as they are, and not as they possibly might be, I have not been able to come to any other decision than the above.

As to the Emperor's penetrating into Italy when opposed by the two above-named powers, I say that, to reduce this opposition to only one of these powers, he will have to make peace with the other, and to do this would require negotiations and time. But even if it could be done without loss of time, I could not count with certainty upon anything until the arrangements were actually concluded. And all that has been said about a truce cannot make me think that a peace could be so promptly concluded with the Venetians, for they have wounded the Emperor too deeply to be so easily forgiven by him; nor is it likely that the Venetians will at once disregard the considerations that have influenced them hitherto, namely, that France will not be disposed to ally herself with the Emperor at the very time when she sees that he feels discouraged. And the Emperor, on his part, will also be inclined to hold back, and wait to see what time may develop, of which at this moment nothing is known. As to his making peace with both of these powers, that is still less to be thought of; for as your Lordships say, and according to my judgment say most wisely, that would require a good deal of time.

And here I would observe, with all due respect, that in my opinion the same considerations as to the Emperor's increase of strength would hold good in the event of his making peace with one of these powers as if he made peace with both. For if Germany were disposed to do her duty towards the Emperor, he would not need to make peace with either power; but were he to make peace with one of them, it would be the interest of Germany not to do her duty to him, so as to keep him feeble and obliged to lean upon her for support. And if Germany abandons the Emperor at a time when he has so many enemies against whom her support would have been most honorable to herself, and most welcome to the Emperor, she would have the more reason for abandoning him when he is supported by a stranger. For to see him become powerful by the aid of a third would arouse the mistrust of Germany, whilst it would have been a small matter for herself to have rendered this aid in a greater or less degree. Thus whichever of the two powers makes peace with him will have to assume the charge of raising and sustaining him; and thus it may well happen that you will have greater need of other protection than that of the Emperor. I shall therefore keep quiet and abide the developments of time ; and if Messer Paolo, who is at Botzen, does not come here within the next five or six days I shall go to see him ; and I really hardly know what to do to avoid a rupture, for, be it said with the utmost respect, your Lordships have spun this thread so fine that it is impossible to weave it. For the Emperor is always needy, and sometimes even necessitous, and unless you take him when he is in that condition, he will demand much more of you than what he would be willing to accept now. And when in such a state of necessity the chances will be three out of four, as suggested in your instructions, that he will not carry out his descent into Italy. Still it might well be that, whilst on the one hand he finds himself in a state of necessity for the maintenance of his troops until everything is thoroughly prepared, he might very soon afterwards become quite strong ; but for the reasons explained before, the preparations for such sudden increase of strength cannot be foreseen from afar. And that is the reason why I have said in previous letters that no one can tell positively beforehand that he will not pass into Italy ; for Germany can and has only to exercise her will to enable him to do so. Whilst on the other hand no one can say positively that he will do so, because in reality Germany never was in favor of this enterprise, and up to the present there is no evidence that she has changed her views. Nor is it to be supposed, as I have already said, that the Tyrol alone could do it. And therefore I venture to say, with the utmost respect, that your Lordships must adopt one of two ways ; either to settle the matter with the Emperor on the terms which he demands, or in the best way that it can be done, in the expectation that, if he lives, he will come into Italy anyhow, if not this year, then the next, and if not alone, then accompanied by some ally ; or you must wait until he is actually in Italy, in the hope that, inasmuch as he is always and under all circumstances in need of money, you will always be in time to make terms with him, even at the risk in such case of its costing you a little more. Thus your Lordships must judge which of these two courses presents the least danger, and then adopt it resolutely, with reliance on the Almighty ; for when men attempt in great matters of this kind to measure every step as with a pair of compasses, they are very apt to deceive themselves.

If in speaking thus I transcend my official duty, it is because

I feel that I have a burden on my shoulders which any man, even of the highest quality, would find very heavy. At the time when I conferred with Messer Paolo, and he made his demand, there were about eight thousand infantry and twelve hundred cavalry here; and had I then offered him, as I might have done, a sum in cash, and had he accepted it, you would be obliged to pay it now; but seeing now that the state of things here, so far from improving, has rather grown worse, your Lordships would doubtless have deemed my action as very strange. If, on the other hand, the Emperor's troops had attacked, as they might easily have done, and routed their adversaries, the Emperor would have felt so encouraged thereby that, instead of demanding sixty thousand ducats, he would not have been satisfied except with a very much larger sum. And then I should have been blamed for the ruin of our city, not by your Lordships, but by the mass of the people; and I should have been exposed to much danger without any fault of mine. But I repeat again, that although matters are not pushed here as energetically as before, and the army is as good as disbanded, nevertheless they may at any time recover their former vigor. The army may be reorganized, if only indifferently; still it may attack and even be victorious, and all may turn out so that your Lordships may no longer be in time to effect an arrangement; and this difficulty will be increased by the fact that you will not be able to send letters of exchange in time, so as to have the money ready to be offered on the spot. This would cause a delay of at least twenty days, whilst the Emperor does not need even two days to change his mind. And you may take it for certain, as I have said before, that if the Emperor is once in the position to be able to avail himself of your money, it will encourage him to that degree that he will imagine that he has already in great part achieved the conquest of Italy. Your Lordships must know, furthermore, that my having to make a reply now without concluding a definite arrangement will very likely bring about a rupture of the whole negotiation, and may give rise to the idea that your Lordships have no intention of paying except with good words; and if such an impression once gains ground here, my stay will become entirely superfluous, and perhaps I may not even be permitted to write. As all letters pass through the hands of the Emperor's agents here, they know that I have received the plenary powers from you; and I shall not be able to persuade them that I am still without definite instructions respecting the demands made by Messer Paolo. They will think that I am not willing to conclude an arrangement, and I apprehend that I may be ordered from here to some out-of-the-way place, where I shall not be able to hear anything of what is going on, and where I may not even be permitted to write. And therefore I beg your Lordships, when you want to send any messenger here to me, to try and find a German familiar with the country, and experienced, who will bring your despatches with greater secrecy and safety; for I do not believe that those whom you have sent until now will be allowed to return.

Your Lordships remark that I have not written anything respecting my offer of forty thousand ducats with sixteen thousand down for the first payment. True I have not written about it, but your Lordships must know that, when Messer Paolo made his demands, he asked me whether I had ever received a reply to the Emperor's demand for a loan of twenty-five thousand ducats. As I could not deny my not having received a reply upon that point, and matters being in that state that I was anxious to avoid exasperating Messer Paolo, I told him that your Lordships were not disposed to lend any money; but that you might possibly raise your offer to a total of fifty thousand ducats, with twenty thousand cash as the first payment, whenever the Emperor should be in an Italian town belonging at the time to some other power. This I thought was better than what your instructions had authorized me to offer, and I did not write to you about it because the demands of Messer Paolo were so much greater than my offer, both as regards amount of the first payment and the shortness of the terms for the subsequent payments, that I did not think it worth while to mention my offer; and I speak of it now only so that your Lordships may be fully informed of everything.

Machiavelli has met with an accident that may prove serious. He has great difficulty in passing his water, and the physicians here do not know whether it is caused by a stone in the bladder, or whether it is owing to an accumulation of gross humors in the blood. If the roads were open, he would have returned to Florence to subject himself to medical treatment there.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

FRANCISCUS DE VECTORIO,

TRENT, 30 May, 1508. *Ambassador.*

LETTER XIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

To-day, being the 7th of June, we have news that the Venetians have taken possession of Fiume, although this intelligence is not fully confirmed. Only some two hundred horse remain here ; all those furnished by the Communes and other parties have returned home, their six months' service having expired ; twenty horse of the Duke of Brandenburg left this morning. Of infantry there remain here about two thousand. The truce is not yet concluded, the discussion of it not being closed, and the final decision postponed from last Thursday to next Sunday. Neither Baccino nor any other messenger has returned from the court, at which I wonder. The priest Lucas arrived here yesterday from the court, and remained over night ; he has now gone to Arco to see the parties engaged in the negotiations of the truce. He says that he left the Emperor at Cologne carrying on war against the people of Guelders, and that he is besieging Croy, the Duke of which has sent him a *carte blanche.* Lucas also stated that the Emperor is indignant against the princes, and refuses to be present at the Diet, but has sent Lang there, which the princes regard as an outrage to which they will not submit ; and that they have sent to request the Emperor to come back himself, offering to furnish him all the troops he may want, but the Emperor pretends to be indifferent about it, hoping thus to dispose the princes still more to furnish him aid ; and that the Emperor is even displeased that the Venetians have not taken Trent, as that would have stirred up the resentment of all Germany. This priest Lucas says that he has really left no troops at all behind, but that at any moment some might be raised, and that he was now on his way to Arco to see whether a truce could not be concluded for three or four months, and that if this were done the Emperor would during that time make such preparations as would cause all Italy to tremble ; and if a truce were not concluded, he would return with all Germany at his back.

Messer Paolo has not come here, and I have not gone to Botzen to see him, for before meeting him I wanted to see the end of these truce negotiations, which I am waiting for, so as to have a better excuse for putting off the conclusion of an arrangement with him; for I believe that, having nothing agreeable to communicate to him, I can only gain by silence. Yesterday Piero arrived with your letter of the 17th, which, being written on parchment and concealed by Piero in a bread, where it had first become wet and then dry, it could only be got out in pieces; and consequently I could not read more than one fourth of it, and that in disconnected sentences. But from the little I have been able to read, I gather that you have again left matters here to my judgment, and that you have been informed that the troops have gone from here merely for a change, and are to be replaced by others, and that from information obtained you apprehend that the Emperor will make terms with the Venetians in conformity with some suggestions of the Pope. In answer to all this, and to begin with this reported arrangement with the Venetians, I can only say that nothing whatever is known of it here; and I really know not what more to say on this matter. As to the troops that have left here to be replaced by others, the priest Lucas reports that he has left none behind him; and it is so long since the troops began to leave here that, if they were intended to be replaced by others, some of these new ones would ere this have arrived here. I believe, however, that all things are possible, and that Germany is able to send both troops and money; but I regard it as a bad sign to see the troops leaving from the time when they were encamped at Pietra, and when they were daily expected here; and that only so few should be remaining here at the time when negotiations are going on for a truce or peace, and when it would have been much more honorable to have had a large force here. In fact, their going home at this time seems to me proof of their having little affection, and still less respect, for the Emperor.

Now, as to forming a judgment upon this state of things, I have in nearly all my previous letters pointed out the difficulty of my doing so, and I have again done so above; and I repeat, that these matters cannot be measured with minute accuracy. I should have gone to the court myself, or should have sent Machiavelli there if I had been free to do so; but if I had gone, I should probably have seen less than what I have been able to observe here. And had I gone and left Machiavelli here, the distance from here to the court being six hundred miles, it would have taken a month to have got a despatch, so that during the interval a thousand changes in the state of things might have occurred. So that, as I have said above, I cannot regard it as a misfortune that I have been obliged to remain here; for a man who, under such circumstances, has to take a definite resolution, can base it with safety only upon what he sees himself; and I shall not act differently, because it is according to the dictates of reason. For even were I told by the most trustworthy persons that at the Diet held at Ulm it had been positively resolved to carry out this enterprise of a descent into Italy with one hundred thousand men, I should nevertheless not have believed it, unless I were to see it actually carried into execution; for I have seen that everybody was deceived last year by the resolution adopted with so much solemnity and general approbation at the Diet of Constanz, and which resulted in there never being as many as four hundred troops got together. For all those that were assembled in Codarno and here were supplied by the adjoining country; whilst the few that had been furnished by the Empire went off and abandoned the Emperor at the very moment of his greatest need; and according to what I see, things at present are likely to take the same course as then. And therefore I reiterate to your Lordships that I shall judge matters here only according to what I see with my own eyes, and shall take counsel only from what I shall have observed personally; for if matters are to be judged of from a distance and at random, then it were better that your Lordships should do it than myself. Nevertheless, I will say that, if matters here were to resume their former vigor, you would no longer be in time to conclude an arrangement with the Emperor at the same price and on the same conditions as now; for you may assume that the Emperor is at this moment very much down, with the water up to his throat, and nearly swamped, and has consequently lowered his pretensions very much, and he has actually forwarded my letters at his own expense; whilst formerly, when he imagined himself very strong, he tried to get tens of thousands out of you without obligating himself to anything. And were he now to get strong again, or imagine himself so, he would quickly resume his former pretensions, and to what height these reached was shown by the demands made by the Cardinal of Brixen, from which he came down step by step as he felt himself becoming weaker. And therefore I say that you ought without further hesitation to adopt one of the two courses which I pointed out in my previous despatch, the original of which I sent you eight days ago by Giovanni della Spada, who has returned to Florence by the same route by which he came.

I have delayed sending off this despatch for a day, to see whether any definite resolution had been arrived at in the truce negotiations; for yesterday it was reported that a truce had been concluded for three years between the Emperor and the Venetians, comprising the respective allies of the contracting parties however only in Italy, and which are to be named within three months; and that the restriction of the allies to Italy was adopted solely for the purpose of excluding the Duke of Guelders. The publication of this was made yesterday in the German camp, but in this publication it was said that the truce was between the Emperor and the Venetians and their respective allies or adherents, without naming France, and without fixing any time for the naming of the adherents. It is said that it will be published here and in Verona on Sunday next.

Thus the truce is at last concluded. I may not be correctly informed as to the details, but these we shall soon know fully, and I will then immediately communicate them to your Lordships; and as the roads and passes will now be open, you will be able to decide conveniently and at your leisure what course to take; or you may send your ambassadors, or do whatever may seem best to you. Machiavelli will return to Florence in two or three days to undergo medical treatment there. I cannot with propriety retain him here. As for myself, I shall join the Emperor and there await my recall, which I crave as a favor at your hands, for I am quite unwell, and my remaining here would not be of the least advantage to your Lordships. For if you really wish to conclude an arrangement with the Emperor, you will be able to effect it with more honor and advantage through the ambassadors you have already selected. And on the other hand, if you do not intend to conclude anything, then the longer I remain here and the more the matter is discussed, the greater will be the loss. And as I could not remain at court unless subject to the control of others, your Lordships would not be able to rely upon the news you would receive from here. Thus, all things considered, I deem my remaining here as entirely superfluous; and so I recommend myself to your

Lordships. I have paid the bearer of this six ducats gold and sixteen kreutzers, so as to enable him to take horse and travel with greater speed; and I have assured him that this shall be considered merely as a payment on account, according as he shall have performed this service.

Idem FRANCISCUS VECTORI,
Ambassador.

TRENT, 8 June, 1508.

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LETTER XIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Francesco Vettori wrote to your Lordships from Trent on the 8th of June and sent the letter by Pietro, the son of the German Giovanni, who promised to be in Florence yesterday. That despatch will have informed you of the conclusion of the truce, and of various other things that have occurred here up to the date of the despatch. By way of precaution Francesco intrusted a full copy of it to Ortolano, the bearer of the present, whom I send from here to-day, so that your Lordships may learn the sooner what Francesco has charged me to communicate to you orally, being myself detained here by my malady.

I left Trent on Saturday last, the 10th instant; but the evening previous I went to see Serentano to ask him for a passport, and he told me that he wished the ambassador to call on him the next morning. Accordingly I accompanied Francesco the following morning to see Serentano, who informed Francesco that the truce had been concluded, each party to name their respective adherents within three months, and that he wished to know whether your Lordships desired to be named by the Emperor. Francesco replied, that he could not speak for your Lordships upon that point, but would write to you at once and inform him of your reply; and that he thought that your Lordships would feel grateful for all the honors which the Emperor was disposed to show you. In answer to which Serentano said, that he ought to write promptly and obtain a reply as quickly as possible, for he had received information that the Pisans had appealed to France for aid in consequence of the attack upon them by the Florentines; and that in his judgment he thought it would not be well that the French should have begun to send troops to them before your Lordships had decided whether or not you wished to be named as adherents of the Emperor.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Since writing the above, I have learned the following in relation to the truce; namely, that it has been concluded for three years between the Emperor and the Venetians nominatively; that it comprises the allies and confederates of the contracting parties respectively, named or to be named within three months. Each party to continue to hold what they possess actually at the time of signing the truce, with the right to build thereon whatever they may deem fit, and to trade in perfect security. And that it is understood that the truce extends to all the imperial towns and places, and to the allies of the Empire, but only to those in Italy, and not elsewhere. *Bene valete.*

BOLOGNA, 14 June, 1508.

According to the conditions of this truce the Emperor named immediately the Pope and the king of Aragon; and the Venetians on their part named the kings of France and of Aragon.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secretary.

SECOND MISSION INTO THE INTERIOR OF THE STATE.*

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LETTERS PATENT.

We, the Ten of Liberty and the Balia of the republic of Florence, signify to all who may see these letters patent, that the bearer of them is the excellent and discreet Niccolo, son of Messer Bernardo Machiavelli, our Secretary, whom we send to levy a certain number of infantry and to conduct them into the Pisan territory. And therefore we command all who are inscribed on the rolls of the military ordinance of our republic to render the same obedience to the said Niccolo as you would to our magistracy. And to you, rectors, officers, and subjects, we command to render him all the assistance he may need, or which he may require of you in the execution of this commission.

Mandantes, etc.

Datum in Palatio Florentino, die 16 *Augusti* 1508.

Niccolo Machiavelli, *Secretary.*†

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* The Florentine republic never had anything more at heart than to be able to put an end once for all to the protracted and costly war with Pisa; and in the spring of 1508, whilst Machiavelli was in Germany, the first trial was made of the militia of the country, which were employed by Niccolo Capponi to lay waste the Pisan territory, where everything was destroyed up to the very walls of the town of Pisa. In adopting so barbarous a way of making war it was evidently the aim of the Florentines to constrain the people of the country to seek refuge within the walls of the city, where, by thus increasing the number of mouths and at the same time the want of provisions, the horrors of famine would soon be produced, with their usual consequences of disturbances and riots, which are the most powerful auxiliaries of a besieging army. In the following month of August the Florentines wanted to repeat this experiment of devastation by destroying all the standing corn and what little had escaped the first attempt; and accordingly Machiavelli was charged with the operation, giving him thus the opportunity of seeing the working of that militia system for the establishment of which he had labored so hard.

† No letters from Machiavelli relating to this mission have been found; but there are in the National Library (Florence) three letters from the Ten, one from Niccolo Capponi, Commissary-General, and one from Pietro Soderini to Machiavelli, in relation to this mission.

THIRD COMMISSION TO THE ARMY BEFORE PISA.*

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LETTER I.

TO NICCOLO CAPPONI, COMMISSARY-GENERAL, ETC.

Magnificent Signore : —

I send you the enclosed, which please forward at once with your usual promptness to Florence. I have nothing else to communicate to your Magnificence except that we are here at the mill of Quosi, to watch whether any new convoy of boats is attempting to come in, and to prevent it as we have done the others. I will only remind you to continue to send us bread every day, as you have done hitherto, as we rely entirely upon you for this supply.

Nothing else occurs to me to say except to recommend myself to your Magnificence, and may God guard you.

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secretary.

From our Camp, 20 February, 1509.

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LETTER II.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

With the exception of Paolo Paranno and two hundred infantry, who were left to guard the camp, we moved on Monday morning with all the rest of the troops to the Figuretta, and began to work immediately with three small barges, which the Signor Francesco, supported by about one hundred infantry, had taken the night before from the Pisans under their very gates. Subsequently, at about noon, Antonio da Certaldo arrived; but as it was already late and the piles and other necessaries were still on the beach, we could do nothing that day towards making the palisade, and therefore put it off until yesterday morning, when we returned there with the same men, and during the day we succeeded, with the help of God, in completing the stockade and placing the obstructions below the Figuretta, about one mile towards the mouth of the river. We have driven three rows of piles, fifteen in each row, binding them together with bands of iron, so that the Pisans can neither cut nor undo them. The bands of iron are all below the surface of the water, so that we think the Pisans will hardly attempt to destroy this stockade, for they could not remain there at their ease. True, they might transport some boats over land, but that would take so long that any one knowing it could easily prevent it. The obstructions are so placed that the Signor Jacopo passed twice quite easily from one side to the other, with eight of his mounted men; and whenever it is necessary to pass them the troops will need only to take fifty fascines with them, and then the army of King Xerxes himself would be able to pass. The Pisans might damage our works by cutting them, but that would require time, which they cannot safely afford, with two hostile armies after them. We shall see what course they will take.

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* The devastation of the Pisan territory by the Florentines had greatly excited the displeasure of the king of France, who disliked this mode of making war; although he subsequently found it to his advantage, after the republic had replied rather bluntly to his threats, and still more so after their having satisfied his avarice by the present of one hundred thousand francs. Thereupon the siege of Pisa was pressed with great activity, and in February, 1509, " the Ten " sent their Secretary to the camp to watch the progress of the siege, provide all

We have met with nothing in the mountains here, although we have used our best efforts to search them thoroughly, and

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necessaries, and to direct the efforts made for preventing succor from reaching the besieged by vessels coming up from the mouth of the Arno.

How admirably Machiavelli fulfilled his duties and how well he deserved of his country in carrying out the objects of his mission, is attested by the letters addressed to him by the Ten, the Commissary-General Capponi, and others in authority, which are on file in the National Library at Florence. So that one of his recent biographers said of him, very justly, that "he was the very soul of the "siege of Pisa, whilst the militia which he had organized were the instruments "of a victory which was followed by a surrender of Pisa in the month of "June."

Whilst with the army before Pisa, Machiavelli was sent on a special mission to Piombino, and afterwards to Pistoja, but in both instances he returned to the camp after a few days' absence. The instructions to Machiavelli by Marcellus Virgilius, etc., and his reports upon these missions, are inserted amongst the despatches relating to the siege of Pisa.

shall continue to do so. I do not remind your Lordships of Giovanni Battista, being persuaded that he is already on the way; and in truth we need him very much. As to the infantry, I can say that the companies are really splendid, and as to their willingness to remain, neither Antonio's nor Morgante's have given me the slightest trouble. From the Pescia company only there are frequent applications for some of the men to visit their families, which I believe is in consequence of their being so near their homes. I have granted such leave to a few of the men, and these have in every instance returned on the day promised. I have reduced the companies from five hundred to three hundred, and shall be able to keep them so for two pay-days longer, as but few men are obliged to return home sooner; but after that I shall be obliged to reduce them to eighty or one hundred men, as it will then be the time for attending to the silkworms (*il tempo dei bigatti*), and the men cannot remain. I should propose then to disband them altogether, were it not that it would be a wrong to their colonel, who is a worthy man, as well as to the men themselves, if, in this enterprise against Pisa, in which they count upon gaining some reputation, neither he nor his banners were permitted to be seen. When that time comes, we may keep those who wish to remain, as they would then have no ground for complaining that they were either forced to remain or be disbanded; although it would be desirable if we could keep all the men, for it is a good and handsome company. These men have already earned eight days' pay, and on the 11th of this month, which comes on Sunday next, they will be entitled to full pay, so that we must give them their money on Monday. I beg your Lordships, therefore, to arrange to have the money here, for the reasons explained in my previous letter, and now renew the request most earnestly.

A certain Bastiano, son of Ser Jacopo Orlandi, corporal of the Pescia company, asked for his discharge at the end of his term, on the ground of ill health. I gave him his discharge, as I had anyhow to dismiss two hundred men; and thereupon he went off to Pescia, and enlisted some ten or twelve men, with whom he entered the service of the Venetians, in contravention of your orders and proclamations. I have learned since then that he came near stirring up the whole company, and attempted to seduce four or six officers, promising them each four ducats here and four more at Faenza. I mention this to your Lordships so that you may manifest your displeasure by retaining him as prisoner, and take such other proceedings as will keep your troops here in proper obedience; otherwise your orders will be derided by everybody, and everything here will end in confusion.

Messer Bandino has returned the cattle some days ago.

As previously reported to your Lordships, there was remitted to Tommaso Baldovini three hundred ducats to pay the first troops from Pescia, of which sum one hundred and eighty-three ducats were lost. The daily supply of straw has been regularly paid, amounting to more than forty ducats; the pioneers from Pistoja have been paid, with exception of their first three days. Picks and shovels have been bought: the iron bands had to be made and paid for. More than ten ducats have been expended in having the wounded gunners cared for, and to send them home. A portion of the bread purchased at Lucca has been lost; and thus we are without money, and yet we have to live. It is absolutely necessary, therefore, that your Lordships send at least two hundred ducats to the said Tommaso; for, besides the extraordinary expenses that occur daily, we have to pay every day four ducats gold, of which three are for straw for the men, and one for the twenty pioneers which we have kept out of the one hundred that came from Pistoja.

To-day there came to see me Messer Agostino Bernardi, a citizen of Lucca, sent by the Signoria of that city to represent to me that your Lordships had written them a rather severe letter, founded upon statements made by me; and therefore they wished to assure me that they would in future take all proper measures to prevent the Pisans from obtaining provisions; and that, if they had not done so hitherto, it was due to the fact that they supposed that your Lordships had taken all necessary precautions yourselves, and had so guarded every point as to prevent the Pisans from coming and going; and that in future they wished me to write to your Lordships in such manner as would tend to maintain the good understanding between the two republics, instead of destroying it. I replied, that your Lordships in coming to an agreement with Lucca had two objects in view; the first, to facilitate the conquest of Pisa, and secondly, to live in security and peace with your neighbors; and if, after concluding that agreement, it became necessary for your Lordships alone to see to it that the Pisans did not avail themselves of the resources of the dominion of Lucca, then the first object of the treaty was done away with, and the agreement might as well not have been made, for that then it would have sufficed merely to don a cuirass to settle any trouble that might arise; and that therefore your Lordships would not be satisfied unless the Signoria of Lucca took the matter earnestly in hand, — that is to say, to prevent the Pisans from making their city an asylum, and to punish those who received them in the country, or who furnished them help or sold them any supplies, — all which things it was impossible for your Lordships to do; that this was the only way to put a stop to it, for as their subjects had nothing to apprehend from our troops in consequence of the existing treaty, and at the same time had no fear of being punished by their own magistrates, all other means were uncertain and useless, owing to the great extent of country which we would have to guard. And therefore it was absolutely necessary that they should send their commissaries to the frontiers and drive the Pisans off their territory, and chastise those who gave them asylum. If they would do this, your Lordships would be satisfied; and that then whoever might be there could only make good report of them, for the good or the bad that was written about them depended entirely on their own conduct. Messer Bernardi promised that his Signoria would do wonders, and that whatever inconvenience we had suffered in the past was caused by some indiscreet or evil-disposed official; that magistrates could bestow office upon individuals, but could not endow them with goodness or discretion, and that they had already appointed commissaries to correct the difficulty; and finally he begged me, in case of any complaints coming to my ears, to write to his Signoria before reporting it to your Lordships, so as to prevent any unfavorable impressions, and to afford them the opportunity of remedying the evil more promptly, and without causing any ill feeling. I promised to do so, and thereupon he left me.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

From the Camp at QUOSI, 7 March, 1509.

COMMISSION TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

RESOLVED UPON BY THE MAGISTRACY OF THE TEN ON THE 10TH OF MARCH, 1509.*

NICCOLO,—We desire you on receipt of this to leave the camp and to proceed to Piombino; we have written at the same time to the commissaries to provide some one in your place with the army, either by selecting one of their own number, or in such other way as they may think best. Our object in sending you to Piombino is as follows. You have probably heard that the lord of Piombino sent to us a certain Giovanni Cola, one of his officers of the court, to inform us that the Pisans had manifested to him a disposition to settle their difficulties with us; and therefore he wished us to grant to some of them a safe-conduct that would enable them to come there for the purpose of negotiating, etc., and that we should send some one there with power to negotiate and conclude an arrangement with them. We have granted the desired safe-conduct, with which three of their citizens left Pisa, whose names we append hereto. The said Giovanni Cola returned here yesterday, and as his safe-conduct was nearly expired he urgently requested us to prolong it for the whole month, and we have reluctantly extended it until the 20th instant. He moreover urged us with great earnestness to send some confidential man, alleging that the Pisans would not explain themselves, nor come to any particulars upon any point unless some confidential person were present on our part. Now, as all these demonstrations seemed to us mere pretexts for gaining time, we have decided, for the purpose of finding out once for all the real truth of this matter, to send some discreet person there, who will manage to do it with the least possible display; and therefore we desire you to go there with all possible despatch, and when you have arrived near the lord of Piombino with our letters of credence, which you will receive herewith, you will state to him that you have been sent there in accordance with his own request, and to learn whether the Pisans who are there have orders and sufficient authority to enable them to conclude an arrangement. You will ask his Lordship whether he has seen these powers, and request him to show them to you, and if there are none, then you are instructed to return immediately; and in that case, you will leave without entering upon any discussion respecting this negotiation. But if his Lordship of Piombino should be of the opinion that the Pisans are really in earnest about this negotiation, and you come to the same conclusion, then you may open yourself further to his Lordship and inquire most particularly of him what it is that the Pisans want; and you will endeavor to learn all the particulars that you possibly can. Also point out to his Lordship that it is only necessary for him to hear the Pisans, as on our part we demand but one thing, and that is Pisa free, with all its territory and jurisdiction, the same as before the rebellion. According as you may find things, you will advance step by step, giving us immediate advice of all that occurs. In short, our intention is to try this expedient, so as not to miss any occasion that might prove of advantage to us. On the other hand, however, we are not willing to compromise our dignity or honor, nor encourage the Pisans by showing ourselves too anxious; for in truth we apprehend that this whole affair is nothing but an artifice on the part of the Pisans to gain time, and to employ this delay in some way to their own advantage.

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* Whilst Machiavelli was in camp with the besieging army, the Pisans applied to the lord of Piombino to act as mediator in bringing about a peace with the Florentines; either because they really wished to negotiate a peace, or, as seemed most likely, because they hoped in this way to gain time and a relaxation of the rigors of the war. Jacopo d' Appiano sent a confidential agent (Giovanni Cola) to Florence to make this known to the Signoria, and to beg them to send ambassadors to Piombino. But suspecting some fraud, the Ten, before engaging in any negotiations, wished Machiavelli to go there and find out what foundation there really was for the proposed negotiations. Machiavelli accordingly went to Piombino, and very quickly ascertained the real state of things, of which he gives full account to the Ten in his letter of the 15th of March, from Piombino.

Apart from the list which we send you, you will endeavor to find out whether all the Pisans who have left their city with a safe-conduct are at Piombino; for if they are not, it would be a sign that they wanted to leave for the purpose of going elsewhere; and you may make this observation to his Lordship, as an indication that the Pisans have really no intention to come to terms. Should you be asked for a further extension of the safe-conduct, you will make them understand clearly that they will not obtain any extension, not even for two hours.

DECEMVIRI LIBERTATIS ET BALIÆ REPUBL. FLOR.

Ego MARCELLUS VIRGILIUS.

LETTER III.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I left the camp on Monday, and arrived here at Piombino yesterday at the twentieth hour; and half an hour later I called upon his Lordship, and communicated to him what your Lordships had commissioned me by your instructions. He replied, that he had had negotiations for some time past with the Pisans to induce them to make terms with your Lordships; that his great desire was the tranquillity of Tuscany, and most particularly the good of your Lordships, whose servant he professes to be; that it was for the purpose of urging this negotiation that he had advised the Pisans through his confidential agent, Giovanni Cola, to send ambassadors here to confer with your envoys so as to arrive at some satisfactory arrangement; that he had made it a point to advise them to give their ambassadors power to treat of the sovereignty of their state, as without such power he knew it would be useless to enter into any negotiations. And after that he had advised your Lordships to grant a safe-conduct to these Pisan ambassadors, and to send some one here to treat with them; that your Lordships had consequently given the safe-conduct, but for so short a time and on such ambiguous terms as would make it better to break off the negotiations rather than endeavor to conclude an arrangement; that as your envoy had not arrived, and the safe-conduct was about to expire, he had, in his desire not to see the negotiation broken off, again applied for a prolongation of the safe-conduct, and had urged your sending an envoy here, but that the prolongation which you had accorded was for so short a time as to preclude the possibility of coming to any conclusion. From all these remarks, it was evident to me that the Signor of Piombino was under the impression that your Lordships mistrusted him; but he concluded by saying that he did not know whether the Pisan ambassadors had full powers or not, although the only thing they had communicated to him was that they had ample authority to treat and to conclude an arrangement; and that he inferred from this expression that they could treat with you in relation to the sovereignty of Pisa, as well as about any other matter that might come up between them and your Lordships; but that they had never been willing to tell him the exact object for which they had come to negotiate, nor to communicate to him any details. All this his Lordship confirmed with his oath, adding that he had been so angry with them in consequence that he had been on the point of sending them back. But finally he wanted to persuade me that it would be as well for me to hear what they had to say, as that would involve neither loss of time nor anything else. I replied that, as I wanted to conform strictly to your Lordship's orders, there was nothing left for me but to remount and return; and I should have done so, but that, according to your Lordships' instructions, I was to find out as far as possible what the Pisan ambassadors really wanted, provided that in my judgment they were serious in their desire to treat. But I could form no opinion on this point, as the Signor of Piombino had told me that he knew nothing of their intentions; unless, therefore, I heard them myself, I could not possibly find out their particular object, nor whether they really intended to treat with us.

I was moreover persuaded of the truth of the remark of the Signor of Piombino, that the mere hearing of what they had to say would neither give them courage nor time. For their safe-conduct held good anyhow until the 20th, and to listen to them would deprive them of all pretext for complaining to their people and the world at large that so solemn an embassy as theirs had been refused a hearing by your Lordships, which they would have held up as an evidence of your unfriendly disposition towards them, which is their only means of keeping up the excitement of the Pisans. Having consented, therefore, to see the ambassadors, with the understanding that I had done so merely to gratify the lord of Piombino, they came, and after a long preamble they complained that it had been promised to them that they should meet two or three of your citizens to treat with them, instead of which a mere secretary had come, and even he did not come direct from Florence. And finally, coming to the point, they said that the people of Pisa were disposed to do all that your Lordships wanted, for the sake of peace and union, provided they were assured of their lives, their property, and their honor. That they had no further instructions for this purpose; but even if they had a thousand others, the subject was one of such supreme importance that they could not venture to conclude anything without fresh instructions from their superiors. To the first part of their remarks, I replied as seemed to me proper; but as to the second part, I turned towards the lord of Piombino, saying that I made no reply, inasmuch as the ambassadors had really said nothing, and if they wanted a reply from me they would have to make some definite proposition. To this they answered that they had said enough in asking security for their lives, their honor, and their property. Whereupon I said that I could make no reply unless they stated what kind of security they required, and if their demand for security was reasonable and honorable it would not be wanting, inasmuch as your Lordships asked nothing more of them than obedience, and cared nothing about their lives, nor their property, nor their honor.

After discussing this question of security for some time, they finally came to this point, namely, that they had thought of various ways of having this security, but had found none other than this: namely, that your Lordships should leave them all within the walls of Pisa, and take for yourselves all the remainder of their dominion; and that they considered it a great gift for you to obtain a just title to so much that you had never possessed before. Thereupon I turned to the lord of Piombino and said: "It must be evident to your Lordship "now that these gentlemen are not in earnest, but are merely "laughing at you; for I believe that if they had said this at "first, and you had supposed them to be in earnest, you would "have declined the trouble of intervening in a matter that "would have resulted in this. But since matters have come "to this point, and so that your Lordship and the people of "Pisa may fully know our intentions, and that you and they "may know how this negotiation will have to be managed, I "tell you that if you do not intend to put into our hands Pisa "unrestricted, with all her territory and jurisdiction, the same "as before the rebellion, it will be useless for you to come here "or elsewhere for the purpose of negotiating an arrangement, "or to give so much trouble to the lord of Piombino, or any one "else. And the same as regards the demand for security for "your lives, your fortunes, and your honor; if you are not disposed to rely upon the good faith of my Signoria, it will be "equally useless for you to weary any one to bring about an "agreement, for the good faith of my Signoria has never yet "required a bondsman; and should it ever need one, none "could be found that would be sufficient. But your most cer-

"tain and real security will ever depend upon the loyalty with "which you throw yourselves into the arms of my Signoria." And then I enlarged upon this in such terms as I thought would be most effective in moving them; after which I turned towards the deputies of the country people, and said that I felt sorry for their simplicity; that they were playing a game at which they could not win, for if the Pisans should carry off the prize in this contest they would not want the country people any longer as their companions, but as slaves, and would send them back to their ploughs. But if, on the other hand, Pisa were taken, which they might expect at any hour, then they would lose their properties, their lives, and everything else. At this Messer Federigo del Virajo began to cry out that I was trying to create a division amongst them, and that what I had said was not proper language for me to hold. The country deputies never said a word, but seemed to relish my remarks, and particularly what I had said in the course of the interview, "that if the Pisans did not want peace, they "would have war, and more of it than they cared to have." Giovanni da Vico said twice, in a loud and resolute manner, "We want peace, we want peace, ambassador!" And the lord of Piombino spoke to the Pisan ambassadors in a loud and angry voice, saying that they had deceived him, etc.

And thereupon I left, saying to his Lordship that I would return to the camp promptly the next morning, and that, if night had not come on during our discussion, I should have left that very evening. His Lordship remained with the Pisan ambassadors for at least two hours later, and at three o'clock of the night he sent me word that he wished to speak with me in the morning before my departure. At two o'clock this morning he sent for me, and told me that, after my leaving the ambassadors in the evening, he had washed their heads for them as they deserved; so that they told him that they would reflect during the night whether there was not some way for them to obtain the desired security, and that they hoped yet to arrive at some satisfactory conclusion. And that they had come this morning to tell him that they had thought of a middle course which they thought would please your Lordships, and which might also prove acceptable to their own people; but that they could not mention it to him until after having first submitted it to the authorities of Pisa, and therefore they intended to return there, either all of them, or half their number, as he thought best, so that they might come back with some definite proposition.

His Lordship added that he had advised them to send only a part of their number back to Pisa, because he thought it best not to break the thread of this negotiation, but that after all he had advised them to do in this matter whatever I thought best. I replied to his Lordship, that I was of the contrary opinion, and that it seemed to me they ought all to go, for possibly your Lordships might not be willing to extend the safe-conduct, in which event the remaining here of a part would lead to a more complete rupture than if they had all returned to Pisa. "Let them go back, then," said I, "and let "them dispose their people to do what I told them yesterday. "Let them get full power, and send it to your Lordship with "such propositions as they may determine upon, and then we "shall not fail to believe them, and they may thus effect some "good." His Lordship, however, adhered to his opinion, as though he had conceived a great jealousy lest your Lordships should not be willing that this negotiation should be carried on here, so that he said to me: "See now, and undeceive your "Signori, and make them understand that this negotiation "will either come to no conclusion, or that it will have to be "concluded here; I understand very well why you advise the "return of all the ambassadors to Pisa, so as to remove the "negotiations from here." I did my best to undeceive him upon this point, and did not leave him until he had positively decided to send them all back.

I then returned to my lodgings, and was on the point of mounting my horse, when Messer Giovanni Cola came and told me that his Lordship had informed the Pisans that it was best for them all to leave; to which, however, they did not agree, as they wanted that at least two of their number should remain, namely, Messer Federigo dal Vivajo, and Filippo di Puciarello; whereupon I told him, "You see now that my Signoria judged "rightly that these ambassadors first deceived his Lordship of "Piombino, and then wanted to carry on these negotiations in "Pisa; and it was only for the purpose of discovering their "real intentions that I advised his Lordship to send them all "back." He replied that his master was very angry about it, and had protested to them that they need not expect another safe-conduct from you, as he would not ask for it, and that the ambassadors had replied to him that they would take such measures as they were able to; and thereupon I left. I shall stop to-night at Allumiera, and on Sunday or Monday I hope to be with your Lordships. I have written this despatch so that you may know as promptly as possible all that has taken place here. The courier has promised to deliver this in Florence on Saturday at dinner-time, and if he does so your Lordships will please pay him one florin, which I have promised him.

I have not been able to verify the list of all the Pisans that came here with the ambassadors, owing to the shortness of the time. But I have talked with Rubertino about it, and he told me that they were all here; and my servants who waited with them at the door of the audience-chamber told me that there was a crowd of one hundred and sixty or more.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret.

Piombino, 15 March, 1509.

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LETTER IV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and reported all that had taken place here till then. This morning there arrived from Pisa Finichietto di Casentino, one of those who were made prisoners with Canaccio; he came here on behalf of all these to recommend themselves, and to inform me that they had heard in Pisa the resolution which your Lordships had taken with regard to the brother of Alfonso,* and that they had been assured that, if Rafaello were hung, they would all be put to death. They begged me, moreover, to send them some money to enable them to live, as they were utterly without any resources. I sent him back to Pisa, and gave him money enough to support him and his companions for some days; and as to their apprehensions I reassured him the best way I knew how. Since then the priest who has officiated in Pisa during Lent left that city, accompanied by a number of monks. On arriving at the barriers I made them all return to Pisa, excepting the priest, whom I kept for good reasons. I have gathered from him a full account of everything that has occurred there from the time of his going to preach there, which in substance amounts to this: that the Pisans cannot hold out any longer, that their sufferings are much greater than what they avow, and that they are far from being united in coming to any good resolution, for the reason that the government is in the hands of the bad; whilst the better-disposed portion of the inhabitants are very desirous of coming to terms with the Florentines. This priest furthermore states, that at his departure from Pisa four of the citizens, whose names will be given below, have charged him to see whether it be not possible to arrive at some arrangement; and that they claim the following as the main conditions, viz.: 1st, full amnesty for the past; 2d, security for the observance of the same; and 3d, the assurance that, if they deliver the city and all its territory freely into our hands, and swear perpetual fealty, which they say was never done by their ancestors, they want to have the same privileges as some other cities in your Lordships' dominions; and that if any hopes of this were held out to them, they would within a few days send envoys to present themselves at your Lordships' feet. He said that he would like to be able to write to the Pisans what I thought of their project; but this I refused him, because the Pisans had refused to accept your Lordships' grace at the time when you were willing to accord it to them, and by their wicked proceedings had added evil to evil, and that therefore they must not think of anything except that your Lordships are resolved to have Pisa either by consent or by force, and that they would very soon see the proof of this.

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* This Alfonso del Mutulo was a Pisan, and being made prisoner by the Florentines he agreed fraudulently with them to deliver Pisa into their hands if they would liberate him. He was consequently exchanged for a Florentine prisoner. And having returned to Pisa he caused at a given signal a company of Florentine soldiers to approach the walls, and began to introduce them one by one into the city by hoisting them up on to the walls by means of a rope. The twentieth man had hardly been drawn up when, casting his eyes into the city as

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he reached the top of the wall, he saw that of his comrades who had been hoisted over before him some had been killed and others bound. On perceiving this he uttered a cry, and made known the treason of Alfonso. The Pisans at once opened a general fire of artillery, by which Paolo da Paranno, who is mentioned in this letter, was mortally wounded. They attempted at the same time a sortie and an attack upon the remainder of the Florentine troops, but were repulsed.

After hearing my reply, the priest said : " Since your Signori " have decided upon this course, let them at least act so that the " Pisans may soon see the beginning of it ; for they are reduced " to that point that their endurance can go no further. Only " yesterday, a body of over three hundred went to the Palace of " the Ancients, crying aloud, ' We are dying of hunger ; the " help which you told us you were expecting has not come, and " we cannot have patience any longer ! ' They were dismissed " with fine words, and promises that within four days some " definite action should be taken, and that they must content " themselves until then ; and that orders would be issued this " morning that there should be bread and grain in the market-" place ; but there was none yesterday, and the price of corn " rose to twelve lire per bushel."

I wanted to make this state of things known to your Lordships ; and so far as I have been able to learn from others, the Pisans can hold out no longer. If we continue to press them as we have begun, and they begin to see that we can reach them with our artillery, then there will be no occasion to resort to any other means, and your Lordships will have brought this long war to an end in a manner most honorable to our Republic. If I hear nothing more from the Pisans, I shall cut short all further parleying, unless your Lordships instruct me otherwise. I have learned that no grain has come into Pisa for four days ; it is this that drives them to desperation, whilst we, on our part, shall continue, with the aid of our infantry and cavalry, to do everything to prevent any provisions from entering the city.

To-day we have heard of the death of Paolo da Paranno ;* may God receive his soul ! for he gave his body to your Lordships. I recommend his children to your Lordships, which I promised him I would do in case the Almighty should dispose of him ; his goodness and loyalty make this whole camp deplore his loss.

Niccolo Machiavelli left here to-day, and has gone to inspect the infantry at the other camps. I have charged him to come back here afterwards, in accordance with your Lordships' instructions ; indeed, nothing could be more agreeable to me than to have him here with me.

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* Paolo da Paranno was mortally wounded on the occasion of the treason of Alfonso del Mutulo.

I have nothing more to communicate to your Lordships to-day, but to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

ANTONIUS DE FILICAJA,*
Generalis Commiss.

From the Camp near ST. JACOBUS, 14 April, 1509.

LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I will answer first your Lordships' letter of the 12th, in which you desire to know the number of troops in each camp, and how many of the regular troops, infantry and other service, ought in my judgment to be changed; also, that I should fully advise you upon every point. In reply I have to say, that since leaving Florence I have not yet been able to visit the camp at San Piero in Grado, and can therefore give you no account of that; but as to the other two camps, I will now report the condition in which I found them. In the camp of the Val di Serchio, where Antonio di Filicajo is the commissary, there are the following troops, viz.: 1st, the priest of Citerna, with 250 men from Fivizzano; 2d, Giovanni Agnolo da Monterchi, with the contingent from Castiglione del Terzieri, numbering 150 men; 3d, Giannesino da Serezzana, with the men of Casentino, being 130; of the original number of 150 twenty were lost by the treason of Alfonso del Mutulo; 4th, Morgante dal Borgo, with 100 men from the Val di Cechina; 5th, Antonio da Castello, with the 100 men from Firenzuola; — making a total of 730 men. Then there are Giannone da Librafatta and Gianotto da Cardo, with 60 men; the Signori Francesco and Giulio del Caccia, with 100 men; and finally, Bernardo da Carrara, who guards the fortress; so that, leaving out Bernardino, there remain to Antonio fit for service 890 men.

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* Machiavelli, having been called to Florence by the Ten to receive special and important instructions, was sent by them to inspect and report upon the condition of the several camps of the forces engaged in the siege of Pisa. He returned within a couple of days to his post. During his absence this letter was written by Antonio de Filicaja; and in the following letter Machiavelli makes his report to the Ten on the strength and condition of the forces at the different camps.

The said Antonio had, moreover, Dietajuti, with 100 men from Valdinievole, which brought his command up to 1,000 men. But Niccolo Capponi, imagining himself to be too isolated and feeble, asked Antonio for the loan of a constable until he could be supplied from Florence; and so he sent him Dietajuti, who was here; and I believe that Niccolo will rather send him in return one of the constables that are again reported to be on the way here, than to give him back Dietajuti, who, as well as his company, is familiar with the country, whilst any newly arrived men are unacquainted with the localities. The other troops under command of Antonio have also a good knowledge of the country, from having been schooled in it for two months. In truth, the whole of Antonio's infantry is as good and handsome, in my judgment, as any other in all Italy at the present day.

Besides Dietajuti, who is not yet quite sure of remaining, we have here the company of Anghiari, without any captain; the men have declared that they will not leave here; on the other hand, Alamanno refuses to send Ronzino here. We will see how we can settle this in the best way, so soon as the troops that are destined for this camp shall have arrived at Cascina. This company of Anghiari counts about 110 men; 2d, there are here the infantry of Pieve, numbering about 180 men; 3d, the infantry of Bibbiena, 186 in number; 4th, the men of Pontessieve, under command of Agnolona, being 112 strong; and finally there are 80 fusileers here, who, added to the others, and not counting Dietajuti's men, make 668 enlisted regular troops. Of inexperienced troops we have, 1st, Carlo da Cremona with 100 men; 2d, Daino and Gattamelata with 60 men; 3d, Morello with 40, and the son of Sannicia Corso with 40; which makes a total of 908 without Dietajuti; so that if you send 200 infantry here, as I understand is to be done, we shall have in all over 1,100 men, not counting Dietajuti; and if he remains with Antonio, or another be sent in his place, then Antonio will also have his full 1,000 men.

The way to prevent the number of our regular troops from diminishing is, whenever eight or ten per cent of them are absent, either from sickness or any other cause, to send the constable and his chancellor into his circumscription, there promptly, and by the use of his and your Lordships' authority and that of the rectors, to raise and send here the number of men that are wanting. And then to make it a rule that the commissaries shall not grant leave of absence to any except such as are really sick; and to punish those who absent themselves without leave, or who disobey, either here or at Florence, or at their own homes, or wherever it can be done. In this way the companies will be kept full and complete without any further trouble. I do not see what troops I could disband, or which to call to replace them, unless in a case of necessity, and then in the manner indicated. And if your Lordships send the money for the pay of the troops in time, I will do my best to save all trouble on that account.

Your Lordships have written me another letter on the 14th, in which you direct me to fix my residence at Cascina, and to order that there be always some eight or ten men under a chief kept in garrison there, with provisions for at least two weeks; and to collect there all the ammunition of lead and balls that has been provided. This letter of yours was found at Cascina by Francesco Serragli, who after reading it sent it to me here yesterday. But as I was here, and not at Cascina, your Lordships will see that I could not have complied with your instructions. I read the letter to Niccolo Capponi, who promised me to answer it to your Lordships. It seems from that letter that your Lordships intend I should fix myself at Cascina; but I do not think this would answer a good purpose, as that post can be filled by any man, no matter of what qualifications; whilst if I remained there, I could be no longer of any service to the army here, nor be in any other way of use here. I am aware that that post would expose me to less danger and fatigue, but if I wanted to avoid danger and fatigue I should not have left Florence; and therefore I entreat your Lordships to allow me to remain in the camps to co-operate with the commissaries in all the measures that have to be taken. For here I can make myself useful, but at Cascina I should not be good for anything, and should die of sheer desperation. I beg your Lordships, therefore, to think of some one else for that post, if Serragli is not willing to remain there, although I think him the most suitable man for the place.

Allow me to remind your Lordships of the pay of Paolo Antonio and his men, who are guarding the forts of Cascina and of the Verruca.

I shall finish the pay of all the regular infantry now at this camp, and will then immediately send you the accounts. I have nothing else to communicate to your Lordships at this time, for their Magnificences the Lords Commissaries will have written to you in relation to the more important matters, and to that I must refer for the present; nevertheless, the moment I have the time, I shall not fail to make a full report on that subject to your Lordships. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

From the Camp at MEZZANA, 16 April, 1509.

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LETTER VI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Three days ago I left the camp at Mezzana for that of the Val di Serchio in company with Arcangiolo da Castiglione, who serves in Antonio's camp in place of Dietajuti. Your Lordships will therefore erase the name of Dietajuti from the roll of Antonio's camp and transfer it to that of Niccolo's, and place the name of Arcangiolo upon the roll of Antonio's camp. In this way the latter will be complete, and Niccolo will require nothing except that Cerchio shall come here to serve under him with the companies which he has here, and to retain the remainder of the company of Anghiari. On the arrival here this morning of the lord commissary with the 100 men from the Val di Chiana, I spoke to him about the troops that are here, and he replied that he could not do with less than 750 regulars, and that therefore he could not see how Cerchio could be detached and sent to Mezzana, as the required number would with Cerchio's men be exceeded by but a very few. For Agnolo da Citerna with the lately arrived has 189 men; Sana has 45, the rest of his company being at Livorno; Cerchio has 94; Captain Piero, 70; Bastiano the fat, 80; and Bastiano the lean, 300; all of which together make up the number of 778; but taking away Cerchio with his 94 men would leave him less than 700. On thinking now how this matter can be arranged so that Cerchio can be sent to Niccolo without breaking up the companies, and at the same time to guard

Livorno, his Lordship has concluded that it could be effected in the following way, viz.: — To bring Sana's entire company here, which is 80 strong, to send 40 of the fat Bastiano's company to Livorno, and to discharge the rest, as a large number of them wish to return home; and then to add 70 men to Sana's company, which he will send one of his captains to levy in the Mugello, and which thus gives him 150 men. To add also enough to Captain Piero's fusileers to bring the present number up to 100, which he will send his chancellor to levy. Agnolo da Citerna to remain here with his 189 men, and Bastiano the lean with his 300; and then Cerchio could be sent to Niccolo Capponi. There would then be at this camp 739 ordnance troops, after the arrival of the 70 new men for Sana and the 30 for Captain Piero, not counting Cerchio's company. And if your Lordships, on the arrival of Sana's and Captain Piero's agents, will expedite them promptly, then this whole affair will be quickly arranged. The infantry of these camps will then be complete, and everybody will be satisfied. On next pay-day the commissary will discharge 40 of the fat Bastiano's company, and send the other 40 to Livorno, where this company without a captain will be better placed, whilst the others will remain with their constables. I do not believe that any better way will be found to satisfy these commissaries. Alamanno will therefore despatch these agents with letters to your magistracy, and your Lordships will please give them prompt despatch.

I shall remain here two days and then return to Antonio's camp, after which I shall proceed to Niccolo's camp, so as to be present at the next pay, the funds for which, according to the memorandum left by me with Niccolo, ought to be here by the 27th of this month, as all the companies have to be paid from the 28th to the 30th instant. I will then send your Lordships the accounts as soon as I can, say within four days, and which want of time has prevented me from doing sooner.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

From the Florentine Camp at SAN PIERO IN GRADO, 21 April, 1509.

LETTER VII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

This is merely to inform your Lordships that the pay of the lately arrived ninety-three men from Fojano runs from the 14th to the 25th, and that the money for it ought to be here by the 25th, as also the money for the pay of the artillerists and of the troops that are not counted as regulars by the constables. For all this three hundred ducats are required; and if your Lordships desire to make the third payment also, then it will be necessary to send the entire amount due to the constables, and I will give it to them in time. But sending only one third of a pay at a time causes confusion; for so soon as the time for the pay has come, and you are not ready at every moment with pen in hand to remind each of his account, they will be constantly after you, and yet will not find their money ready for them. I beg your Lordships, therefore, to send the money due to the supplementary force from the Val di Chiana; also for an entire pay of all the constables, so as to avoid the confusion above referred to. I shall also need the money for the pioneers to-morrow; and will send you by the first courier the accounts of the money I have had until now. It was intended to employ two hundred pioneers to devastate the country around the camp; but it seems now that it will be better to employ four hundred, so as to be able to do the work in two evenings, and thus get through the sooner with this business, which is very important, as we have to leave the camp almost entirely unprotected; and the more rapidly one proceeds in this sort of things the more securely it is done, for the men have to go up to the very walls of the town, where they are exposed to the fire of the artillery. I recommend myself to your Lordships.

ALAMANNO SALVIATI,
Commissary-General.

From the Camp at SAN PIERO, 23 April, 1509.

LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I arrived here yesterday evening, and have conferred with his Magnificence the Captain respecting the supply of bread. He made me talk with the deputies of the Priors charged with the supervision of the government shops for the sale of bread, etc., and with a certain Betto Baroni with whom these deputies have made a contract. The deputies told me that they had paid Betto thirty ducats this month, in consideration of which he had obligated himself to supply the camp at his risk of profit or loss; and that they did not know what could have given rise to the disorders, saying that Betto had done his duty. The latter, who was present at the interview, said that under his contract with Antonio he was obliged to send daily thirty to forty measures of bread to the camp, and that he had regularly done so; and that the deficiency was owing to the people of the Val di Nievole, on whom the commissaries had counted; but if the commissary wished, he would supply the camp daily with one hundred measures, which was about the quantity daily consumed, at a suitable price and weight. But in that case the commissary must give orders, either that no bread shall come from elsewhere, or, if it does come, shall not be sold until his is disposed of, as he does not want to be obliged to throw his bread away. I for my part believe that if not more than thirty or forty measures of bread are sent from here every day, and that they have to depend for the rest upon what may be supplied by the people of the Val di Nievole, the camp will frequently be exposed to scarcity; for I have myself experienced the way in which these communes act, sending large supplies one day and nothing the next. In fact, they cannot well do differently, having no grain in store at home, but being obliged to buy their supply of grain here. I imagine that Antonio has not allowed these to supply all, because perhaps the bread seemed to him not to have full weight; but the deputies have promised me to remedy this by establishing proper means for weighing the bread, etc. at the sutler's shop. Another point in connection with this matter is that the Quartermaster-General has no profit from the bread supplied by the contractor, whilst from the other he has six quattrini per load, and therefore he has always persuaded Antonio to get his supplies by way of Pescia rather than by way of Pistoja. I shall see Antonio to-morrow, and have a talk with him about this business.

I have written these details to your Lordships so that you may see that this commune has done and continues to do its duty; and that, if irregularities have occurred, you may know whence they have come. The contractor tells me that his correspondent has written him that there is abundance of everything in the camp. But that system cannot be regarded as a good one which gives abundance one day and scarcity the next.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PISTOJA, 18 May, 1509. *Secret.*

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LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

All three of us having met here to-day, partly to see each other once face to face, and partly to talk over what ought to be done now after the devastation of the country, which may be said to have been carried out most effectually. The news of our meeting having reached Pisa, Tarlatino addressed a letter to us, saying that, if we would consent to it, four of their citizens would come to confer with us, namely, Francesco del Torto, Matteo di Gaddo, Antonio dell' Oste, and Carlo Bandella. Deeming it well to hear what they had to say, they came, and we received them with a courteous welcome. After resting a little while, Francesco del Torto spoke in the name of all, and said that their Signoria and people had appointed twelve deputies to proceed to Florence and throw themselves at the feet of our illustrious Signoria for the purpose of composing the differences between the commune of Pisa and the republic of Florence; that they had come to make this determination known to us, and to ask of us a safe-conduct for this deputation. We began our reply in the most friendly terms possible, so as to impress them thoroughly with the kindly disposition which our city entertained towards them; and then we went on to say that what had done them most harm hitherto was their attempt to gain time, whilst if they had not done so, but had rather anticipated time, their harvest would have remained safe, and would not have been taken from them; and that these delays, on which they perhaps still counted, might prove as injurious to them in the future as they had been in the past. And if they wished to hasten matters, it would be well for them to settle the outlines of an arrangement with us, even if they could not conclude anything definitely; that this might be done in one day, as they could at any moment communicate with Pisa; and that it would not be so easy at Florence to settle the difficulties that might arise during the negotiations. Nevertheless, the safe-conduct was at their disposal, and they might adopt either course that seemed to them best; but that in our judgment the first was the best, being the shortest. They replied, that they liked our suggestions, but, having no power to negotiate with us, they could do no more than to ask for the safe-conduct. They would, however, return to Pisa and talk the matter over with the authorities, and then take one course or the other, and would make known to us what had been decided upon; and then they would ask for the safe-conduct, or would endeavor to negotiate with us; and thus the matter was left.

Our discussion was pretty long, and touched upon various subjects, and from their language and their actions they seemed to us really well disposed; and it may well be that, whether they come here or proceed to Florence to settle the details, a satisfactory result will be reached. They said that we must not be surprised if during to-morrow, or even the next day, we were not to hear anything more from them, but that such delay would only serve more certainly to reach a satisfactory conclusion. To this we have urged them, and in all our arguments we have endeavored to inspire them with confidence that they may expect from our city more clemency, more security, and more advantages than they themselves could ask for. They expressed themselves satisfied of this, and disposed to persuade those of their fellow-citizens who remained obstinate, or who held different opinions. Thus matters stand, and your Lordships can now form as good a judgment of the matter as we can ourselves. We must wait now to see what they will decide upon, of which your Lordships shall be promptly advised. We do not send the names of the deputies appointed by the Pisans, as Niccolo has communicated them in a note to your Lordships this morning. All these negotiations do not cause us to relax in the least our efforts in this enterprise, which we shall continue to press until we have the proof in hand that they are really in earnest, which we are disposed to believe from what they have said to us in public, and since then to each one of us in particular, unless, indeed, they are otherwise interfered with, from which Heaven preserve us! We recommend ourselves to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

ANTONIO DE FILICAJA,
ALAMANNO DE SALVIATI,
NICCOLO CAPPONI,
Commissaries-General.

From the Camp in the VAL SERCHIO, 20 May, 1509.

LETTER X.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

In another letter which I wrote to your Lordships to-day, I reported all that had taken place here up to that time. Since then I received, at about the twentieth hour, a letter from Tarlatino, in which he informs me that the Pisans have decided to reduce the number of deputies from the country from eight to five; and that the country deputies have agreed to it, for they were made to see that so large a number of deputies from the country would not be to the honor of those from the city. It has been definitely decided that the deputation to Florence shall consist of five from the country and four from the city of Pisa; they are to send here to-morrow for the safe-conduct; and we shall see now what will come of it. Simone da Pontremoli is here, as your Lordships know, for the purpose of soliciting Tarlatino, who has already rid himself of his effects, and as a last demand has asked to take away his bed and other heavy furniture. This desire to take away his bed shows that he intends going elsewhere to sleep; but it would not be at all astonishing if he were to delay it for some days; for as these peace negotiations are in progress, he would like to see them concluded or likely to be concluded, so that your Lordships would be under some obligation to him in that matter; or to make himself useful to your Lordships in some other way. And if his conduct is well examined, it will be seen to be natural and reasonable. I have never considered it otherwise, and do not think so now;

but if any one is deceived by it, the error will be natural and justifiable. Nor would Simone da Pontremoli have come but for the purpose of having Tarlatino leave Pisa, considering who sends him, and has given him money and letters; and considering also how earnestly he intrigues and solicits, as well as by every letter I receive from Tarlatino, which are all in his handwriting; and how, whilst near me, he protests that he can pledge his word but once, and that rather than forfeit that he would lose his life. These kind of people seem to make great account of their pledges, and the higher their grade the more they value their word. But let happen what will, Tarlatino's being sent out of Pisa can only be of advantage to you and injurious to the Pisans. And no other means than these could have been employed to get him out of Pisa; for he will have to get away by stealth, which he could not do if he were to take all his effects with him.

The names of the five country deputies that have been finally appointed are as follows: Ser Tommeo da Calci, Matteo di Gaddo, Antonio dell' Oste, or del Zanna, which is the same, Carlo Bandella, and Tommaso del Malasoma. Of the city deputies a list has already been sent you by Niccolo Capponi. I have nothing else to communicate to your Lordships.

ANTONIO FILICAJA,
General. Commiss.

From the Camp near SAN JACOPO, 21 May, 1509.

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LETTER XI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

At this eighteenth hour I receive a letter from your Lordships. Having written you at length only four hours ago, I have nothing to say in reply to your present letter. The enclosed I have received from Tarlatino from Pisa. Your Lordships will note what he writes. It seems to me that matters are progressing; I judge so particularly from what the said Tarlatino writes to the Signor Muzio, namely, that the ambassadors are to leave Pisa this evening or to-morrow morning. May it please God that it prove of advantage to our city! When I come to Florence I shall leave here in my place Rafaello

Fedini, who is in every way capable of acting as my substitute, the same as though I were personally present, particularly seeing the excellent disposition and good will of the gentlemen Condottieri; so that your Lordships can safely rely upon him and have your minds easy. *Valete!*

Servitor

ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS,
Generalis Commiss.

From the Florentine Camp at SAN PIERO IN GRADO,
23 May, 1509.

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LETTER XII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

To-day at about the nineteenth hour I was in our intrenchments with the nine Pisan ambassadors, and now at this twenty-fourth hour I am with them here at San Miniato. I shall leave here to-morrow morning, and will endeavor to be to-morrow evening at about the twenty-second hour at Legnaja a Capponi, according to the instructions in your Lordships' last letter; and shall there await your further orders as to the course I am to pursue. I beg to remind your Lordships to give orders to have the money for the pay of the regular troops at San Piero by the 26th, without fail, so as to prevent the occurrence of any disorders. *Valete!* *Servitor*

ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS,
Generalis Commiss.

SAN MINIATO, 24 May, 1509.

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LETTER XIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

To-night at the fifth hour I received your Lordships' letter directing me to be at Florence at dinner-time, and to enter the city with the Pisan ambassadors, and to conduct them directly to the lodgings that have been prepared for them. I must observe to your Lordships, however, that it will not be possible to take these deputies all the way to Florence without giving them a meal on the way, for some of them are aged, and some unwell.

And therefore I count upon stopping for refreshments at the country-seat of Francesco Antinori, and from there to proceed and make our entry into Florence at about the twentieth hour, and to take them by the nearest route to San Piero Scherrajo, where you inform me that their lodgings have been prepared. *Valete!*

ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS,
SAN MINIATO, 25 May, 1509. *Generalis Commiss.*

LETTER XIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Having left Florence yesterday together with the six Pisan ambassadors, we reached here in the evening, too late to proceed any farther. As this deputation did not seem to me altogether to the purpose, it was not without some reluctance that I remained with them. Nevertheless, I conversed at length during the journey with each of them separately, and found them all well disposed to that degree that some of them declared to me that they would be willing to leave their own children as hostages with any one who still mistrusted them; so that, if the facts correspond to their words, we may say that we are as good as in Pisa. These six ambassadors have just left for Pisa, it being now the eleventh hour; and all of them were still in the same frame of mind. I shall wait now to see what success they will have, of which your Lordships shall be duly informed; and to enable me to continue this negotiation more conveniently and to communicate more freely with your Lordships, I shall establish myself at Mezzana with Niccolo Capponi, provided my other colleagues approve of it. I have therefore written to Capponi to come here to-day, if he thinks well of it, so that we may all three confer about what has taken place, and come to an understanding as to the course we are to pursue hereafter in this negotiation.

I have nothing more to communicate, and recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus
ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS,
CASCINA, 31 May, 1509. *Generalis Commiss.*

LETTER XV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

We have not written to your Lordships since our last of yesterday evening, as nothing of interest has transpired since then, and we were most desirous to be able to report some progress in this negotiation. This evening an individual came here from Pisa, and informed us that the country people and the citizens had been in consultation all day in relation to their respective interests, and that the former were altogether resolved to conclude an arrangement with Florence; and that, to avoid further sufferings from the effects of the war, they were anxious that the citizens of Pisa should be of the same mind; but that the latter, after much debate, wanted to wait until to-morrow before taking any definite resolution. The country people, thinking that the citizens merely wanted to delay the matter, told them that they would not leave until some decision had been arrived at, and that they had caused the palace gates to be closed until the matter had been decided, as they would not at any rate remain any longer in the present situation. In fact, we learn that they really cannot hold out any longer, and if the hope of peace were extinguished, one half of the inhabitants of Pisa would die of hunger, for in that case every one would lock up what provision yet remained to him. We hope to be able to communicate something definite to your Lordships to-morrow, and will see that you are promptly informed.

Tarlatino notified us to-day, in two of his letters, that he would like to have his accounts settled. The last time, he sent his accounts to a brother of his, who arrived here to-day. We have replied, in general terms, that your Lordships were well disposed towards him; but owing to Antonio's absence from here at this time, and not knowing what the end of the Pisan business would be, we could not make any particular reply at this moment. We believe that he is thus pressing because he thinks that the Pisan business is about to be settled; and on the other hand being solicited by Simonetto, he would like before leaving Pisa to have his business disposed of, hoping to have it done on better terms. We could wish that he were out of Pisa, so that we should not have to pay him anything; and being away from Pisa, he could not interfere with our negotiations; as he would be apt to do if he were there, and perceived that we were putting him off with fine words, without concluding anything definite. We have written to Antonio da Filicaja to have Simonetto continue his solicitations, and will see now what effect that will produce.

Every day almost the entire population of Pisa would like to come here, some because they think that peace is already concluded, and others to show that they are our friends. If by to-morrow the Pisans do not come to some definite determination, we shall make it known that we shall treat all who come into our camp as enemies; this will have the effect of spurring them on to a decision. Meantime, there has been no harm in having intercourse with some of these wild fellows, as it will tame them down a little, and soothe their spirits somewhat; for we understand that the difficulty lies altogether with but a few of the citizens, not exceeding twenty-five in number, who up to the present have prevented the conclusion of peace.

This evening the courier despatched by your Lordships brings us your letter, from which we note the news of the one hundred and fifty Pisan infantry who have left Lombardy to come to Pisa. We have given afresh all possible orders to prevent their coming; and as to Tarlatino and Simonetto, we have stated above all that has occurred. True, we have at this moment, it being about the third hour, received letters from Antonio saying that Tarlatino had applied to him for a safe-conduct for himself and such Pisans as he may take with him, and that they intend to leave to-morrow, and he asks our advice upon this matter. We have answered him to give the safe-conduct to Tarlatino and the Pisans whom he may take with him, provided they are able-bodied soldiers; and that, should Tarlatino ask for any compensation, to say to him that he will have to confer with us upon that point.

I, Niccolo, beg to remind your Lordships of the pay of Daccio and Gattamelata, it being thirty-six days since they have received any money. *Valete!*

ALAMANNO SALVIATI, } *Commiss.*
NICCOLO CAPPONI, } *General.*

From the Camp at MEZZANA, 1 June, fourth hour of night, 1509.

LETTER XVI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last letter to your Lordships was of yesterday, and I therein said all that had occurred up to that moment. A very little while after that, I received letters from Alamanno Salviati dated at Cascina, in which he informs me that he had sent a portion of the ambassadors back to Pisa to examine and perfect the articles of agreement that had been sketched out at Florence; and that he intended afterwards to go to Mezzana and remain there, it being a convenient place for the Pisans in case they should wish to communicate with us upon any point; and equally convenient for us three commissaries, if there should be any occasion for our meeting together. Accordingly I went to Mezzana, and was there informed by Alamanno of all that had been done at Florence with the Pisan ambassadors, in relation to which I have nothing to observe. We must now await the issue of this business. I learn that, on the return of these ambassadors to Pisa, they were received by the multitude with great demonstrations of joy; after which they proceeded to the palace, accompanied by a number of the first citizens, to examine the articles of agreement. Orders were given for the assembling of the Council to-day, for the purpose of finally perfecting those articles, which, may it please God, will soon relieve us of all further anxiety. We have not heard anything here of the news given by the captain of Fivizzano, and yet, according to the orders given, we ought to have heard something about it. We have not, and shall not abate our vigilance by day or night in accordance with orders given on that point.

Nothing else occurs to me to write about, except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Antonio de Filicaja,

From the Camp, 1 June, 1509. *General. Commiss.*

LETTER XVII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

We wrote to your Lordships yesterday, at the fourth hour of night, and reported all that had transpired up to that moment. This morning, at the first hour and a half of the day, a messenger arrived with letters from Tarlatino, informing us that the ambassadors, who had returned from Florence, had referred the question respecting the troops to us three commissaries; and that the troops had deputed him, together with four of their number, to come here and settle that matter with us. Judging that these soldiers wanted to press the settlement of their case before it should become known what resolution had been taken in council, so as to obtain more favorable conditions, we have detained Tarlatino's messenger here, on the ground that, before replying to him, we wished to know what had been decided in council yesterday. Whilst thus temporizing, Andrea de Puccrello, brother of Filippo, arrives, at this sixteenth hour, to inform us on the part of Filippo that the ambassadors are hastening here to bring us the resolution of the acceptance of the agreement, and that everything was settled. We have deemed it proper to send this information to your Lordships by a mounted messenger, so that you may know, from hand to hand, how matters stand. We shall endeavor to do the best we possibly can in the matter between your Lordships and Tarlatino and the troops, and will inform you of all with the utmost despatch. All that we write now is founded upon the information sent us by the said Andrea. We shall, however, report again so soon as we learn the particulars from the ambassadors, and will immediately after their arrival despatch a mounted messenger to your Lordships.

ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS, } *Commissarii*
NICOLAUS CAPPONEUS, } *Generales.*

From the Florentine Camp at MEZZANA,
2 June, 1509, at the 15th hour.

LETTER XVIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

The last letter I have from your Lordships is of the 30th ultimo, since which I have not heard from you. Yesterday all three of us met at the camp at Mezzana, together with the Pisan ambassadors, with whom we conferred at length in relation to the treaty of peace; they concluded by telling us that they were going to Florence to ratify the treaty. Alamanno goes with them, and we will inform your Lordships fully of all particulars.

Nothing further occurs to me to say on the subject, except to urge promptness, for in the present position of things all delay will be of more advantage to the Pisans than to us. And yet it will be difficult to prevent this altogether, for I am sure there were yesterday not less than three hundred Pisans in the camp at Mezzana; and, if I had not kept our troops on the trenches this morning, so as to prevent persons from passing, the camp would actually have been filled with Pisans, who would all have returned to the city after having been well fed.

The time for paying the regular infantry falls on the 5th of this month. On the same day comes due the pay of the Signori Francesco dal Monte, Gianotto da Carda, Giannone da Librafatta, and Auzino. And although the peace negotiations are drawing to a close yet until they are definitely concluded I deem it proper to remind your Lordships of the pay due the infantry; for on the one hand the Pisans are still with their ears erect, and on the other hand, if these troops are not paid on the very day, they become at once turbulent. Your Lordships can best judge of the result, and give such orders as the case demands.

Nothing else occurs to me to say at present, except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Antonius de Filicaja,
Commiss. Generalis.

From the Camp near San Jacopo,
this 2d day of June, 1509.

LETTER XIX.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

This evening I have your Lordships' letter, dated this morning at the fifteenth hour. As Alamanno with the Pisan ambassadors will have arrived at Florence, it is not necessary for me to say anything on that subject. A great crowd of men came here yesterday from Pisa, and, as they came so freely and showed so much good will, we felt that we could not refuse to allow them to take a little bread away with them. It was the same to-day, but they did not come in such numbers, nor did we allow them to carry away so much bread with them; to-morrow I shall restrict them still more, but always with kind words, and shall not allow them to come into the camp nor to carry anything away with them. But your Lordships can well imagine that this cannot be done without the greatest difficulty, as Alamanno will be able to explain to you; but matters are in that state that we must very soon see the end. The regular troops received their pay on the 25th, but Duccio and Gattamelata have not had theirs for thirty-seven days now; your Lordships will please, therefore, to provide the money for it.

At the time of destroying the harvest, I informed your Lordships of the death of several horses belonging to Giovanni Capoccia and two other men-at-arms of the Signor Marc Antonio; and as this destroying of the harvest had been a most laborious and perilous work, I suggested that it would be well for your Lordships to treat these men with some little consideration, and in reply you directed me to let Capoccia and the others who had lost their horses know that your Lordships were disposed to make them some compensation. I have waited until now to remind your Lordships of this, so as to see whether there might not be some others who had suffered similar losses. The destruction of the crops being accomplished, I have thought proper now to bring this matter to the notice of your Lordships, as I had told these men of your Lordships' intention. The horse of Giovanni Capoccia was the best he had, and was worth a hundred ducats; the other two were worth together sixty to eighty ducats. I recommend this matter to your Lordships so as to encourage the others, for your Lordships know well that when a man loses a horse of such value he is undone.

Nothing more at present, except to recommend myself to your Lordships.

From the Florentine Camp at MEZZANA,
3 June, 1509, 4th hour of night.

P. S. Although I believe that your Lordships will liberate all the Pisan prisoners when the treaty goes into effect, yet I desire much to have special instructions as to whether the brother of Alfonso is to be treated the same as the others.

NICCOLAUS CAPPONEUS,
Commiss. Generalis.

P. S. I suppose that when we enter Pisa your Lordships will want to rebuild the citadel as soon as possible; and we must therefore think of providing the necessary materials, more particularly lime, which is not to be had in this country excepting at the one kiln at Vico. I have ordered some burned there; still it seems to me advisable that your Lordships should order some to be prepared, so that no time need be lost.

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LETTER XX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday, and although I am sure that it is unnecessary to remind your Lordships, yet I deem it well to urge you to finish what is to be arranged with those ambassadors; for such is the necessity of the Pisans, and such their confidence in your Lordships' good intentions towards them, and in the certainty that the treaty is concluded, that I cannot prevent their continually coming into camp and carrying off something from here. I have put guards at all the passages; but good words have no longer any effect, and I do not think it well to employ harsh ones just at the moment when matters are on the point of being closed. I shall of course do my best to restrain them and to prevent them from carrying things away, but I await with eagerness the news that everything is settled at Florence. I have nothing further to write, except to recommend myself to your Lordships.

NICCOLAUS CAPPONEUS,
Commiss. Generalis.

From the Florentine Camp at MEZZANA, 4 June, 1509.

LETTER XXI.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

My last to your Lordships was of yesterday, in which I reported all I had to say. Last night I received your Lordships' letter through the hands of Niccolo Capponi addressed to us jointly, to which I have no reply to make, other than that I am executing and ever shall continue to execute all your Lordships' orders. I would now reiterate with the utmost respect what I wrote yesterday, to urge your Lordships to make every effort to close with the Pisan ambassadors; for, as matters now stand, everything is of advantage to the Pisans and adverse to us; and although it is generally said that the Pisans, and particularly the inhabitants of the city, are most favorable to the conclusion of peace, yet I can assure your Lordships that there are some crooked sticks left amongst them. At the last meeting in council, when the return of the ambassadors to Florence was decided upon, there was great difficulty to bring this about; and had it not been for the country people who were at the meeting of the council, they would have broken up and left the palace in anger. And it is not without reason that they watch most diligently to prevent letters from leaving or coming into the city. These facts have been communicated to me by a man of good character, and who desires to see the treaty concluded.

In reminding your Lordships yesterday of the pay of the infantry, I omitted to mention with the others Bernardino da Carrara, who is at Librafatta, and whose pay falls due at the same time as that of the other constables. Your Lordships will act in this matter according to the decision you may arrive at with the Pisan ambassadors; a prompt conclusion will be a great saving of money. I have nothing else to write, except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Antonio de Filicaja,
Commiss. General.

From the Camp near San Jacopo, 4 June, 1509.

LETTER XXII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

All three of us have met here in the camp at Mezzana, and have ordered all our Condottieri to come here to devise the mode of entering Pisa, how we are to maintain ourselves there, what garrison we shall have to establish, etc., etc. We will advise your Lordships in another letter of the result of our deliberations. I, Alamanno, left San Miniato this morning, and on arriving at Cascina I sent from there by the direct road those of the ambassadors who came with me, and who with such cheerful mien expressed themselves so well satisfied with all that had been done as actually to increase our favorable disposition towards them; Niccolo Machiavelli reports the same of those who came with him. They lodged last night at Cascina, and were to arrive at Pisa this morning at sunrise. It is now about the eighteenth hour, but we have not yet heard from Pisa what they have done in public. True, some three or four hours ago several Pisan citizens came here, and assured us that the ambassadors had made the most favorable report in private, but that they had not yet spoken in public. So soon as we hear anything further we will immediately write to your Lordships; we send these present lines merely that you may not unnecessarily be kept in suspense, and that you may know how matters stand at this hour.

We have also learned, thanks be to God, that Tarlatino has left Pisa, and gone in the direction of Lucca, to go from there to Lombardy. We are anxiously awaiting a supply of bread, which of all things is most needed. We have nothing more to say at this moment, but recommend ourselves to your Lordships.

From the Florentine Camp at Mezzana,
6 June, 18th hour and a half, 1509.

P. S. At this moment we receive your Lordships' letter of this morning, sent by an express messenger, and can only say in reply that we shall conform with all possible diligence to all the orders your Lordships may send us.

We shall carefully watch the soldiers, as well as all others who may enter Pisa, and shall hasten the entrance into Pisa either in the way in which your Lordships indicate, or in any other possible way. We learn from a person just from there, that the Council is assembling in the utmost haste, and nearly the entire population of Pisa is rushing to the meeting.

ANTONIUS DE FILICAJA,
ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS,
NICOLAUS CAPPONEUS,
Commiss. Generales.

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LETTER XXIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Yesterday evening I received a letter from your Lordships, and to-night I have another. In reply I can only say that I am expecting Alamanno to dinner and that Antonio will be here after dinner, and should anything of interest occur I will immediately inform your Lordships. The three ambassadors could not reach Pisa last night, but stopped at Cascina, whence they were to start at an early hour this morning. I firmly believe that they will expedite matters to-day so that we may enter into Pisa to-morrow; for if they are well disposed, there will be no difficulties.

It has been impossible for the past two days to restrain the people of Pisa, and prevent their coming into our camp; and we on our part, in view of the certainty of the conclusion of peace, defend ourselves the best way we can from their eager attentions. Tarlatino left Pisa this morning, and has gone towards Lucca. I have nothing further to write except to recommend myself to your Lordships.

NICOLAUS CAPPONEUS,
Commiss. Generalis.

From the Florentine Camp, 6 June, 1509.

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LETTER XXIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

We wrote to your Lordships to-day at the twenty-first hour all that had occurred up to that time. Since then, at about the twenty-third hour, Messer Francesco del Lante and Ser Tommio da Calsi arrived here, and told us that they had come to signify to us that immediately on their arrival in Pisa, and after having informed their Priors of the terms of the treaty, which were satisfactory to them as well as to all who had heard them, they had endeavored to assemble their Council with as many adjuncts as possible, so that this business, which concerns every one, might be confirmed by every one; but that with all their efforts they had not been able to get as many together as they desired to have; for very many of them were busy in getting their houses in order to receive us and our troops; and a portion of the country people had gone out to work in the fields and attend to other business. Thus they had been obliged to put off the meeting for the approval of the treaty until to-morrow; but that at the first hour of night they would have notice published for the meeting of the general Council to-morrow morning; and that they would not have the city gates opened to-morrow until after the Council had assembled. They have promised to bring us the ratification to-morrow before dinner, and seemed delighted to have found those persons pleased and well disposed who until now had been very differently disposed. We fully believe that they will come to-morrow according to their promise; and we shall see to it that we get possession to-morrow of the whole or part of the state, making ourselves masters of the artillery and of some strong positions in the city, of which we shall notify your Lordships successively.

The gentlemen Condottieri have met to-day for the object mentioned in our letter of the 18th, and have concluded that it will be necessary at first to keep a garrison of not less than one thousand men in Pisa; and for this purpose we shall keep six hundred of the regular infantry, and the other four hundred of the troops under the old constables.

We have nothing further to write at present, except to recommend ourselves to your Lordships.

ANTONIUS DE FILICAJA,
ALAMANNUS SALVIATUS, } *Commiss. Generales.*
NICOLAUS CAPPONEUS,

From the Florentine Camp at MEZZANA,
6 June, 4th hour of night, 1509.*

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* The Florentines entered Pisa on the 8th of June, 1509. The letter of the Commissaries giving an account of their entrance has not been found with the others given above. A full account of the surrender of Pisa, and of the extremity to which the inhabitants had been reduced, will be found in the eighth book of Guicciardini's History, and in Biagio Buonaccorsi's Journal, page 14.

MISSION TO MANTUA

ON BUSINESS WITH THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.*

COMMISSION

GIVEN TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI TO PROCEED TO MANTUA AND ITS VICINITY,

RESOLVED UPON ON THE 10TH NOVEMBER, 1509.

NICCOLO, — You will proceed to Mantua, accompanied by two or three mounted men, bearing the sum of money due on the payment we have to make in that city to the Emperor, or his legitimate representative, for the second term or second payment of the amount which we have engaged ourselves to pay according to the treaty lately made with his Majesty. It is important that all of you, or at least yourself, should travel so as to arrive there on the 14th, or at latest the 15th, of the present month. To enable you to transact this business the more easily, you will be the bearer of a letter of credence to the most illustrious Marchioness, to whom you will relate all that may have happened to you, after having first thanked her in the most grateful manner for all the good offices and kindness which she has shown to our ambassadors, enlarging upon this as fully as you may think suitable.

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* After the fatal League of Cambray against the republic of Venice, the soil of Italy was overrun, in the spring of 1509, by foreign armies, who from the first had easy victories. But the Emperor Maximilian was less fortunate than the other members of the league; for although his troops succeeded at the first rush in taking Padua and Treviso, yet these cities soon freed themselves from this new domination, and returned to their submission to the Venetians. When the Emperor thereupon crossed the Alps in person, he began at once to molest the Italian states with demands for money; and, most naturally, the first called upon was the republic of Florence, who sent ambassadors to the Emperor at Verona, and concluded a treaty with him. By the articles of this treaty the Emperor obligates himself to guarantee to the republic of Florence all her possessions, and pledges himself not to disturb the actual government of Florence nor the liberties of the state, nor permit his generals to do so. The Florentines, on the other hand, obligate themselves to pay the Emperor the sum of forty thousand ducats, in four instalments: the first, in the course of the month of October; the second, on the 25th of November, which is the present one, to which this mission relates; the third, in the course of January; and the fourth and last, in February. See Buonaccorsi's Diary, p. 144, and Guicciardini, Lib. VIII.

Having to make the second payment of ten thousand ducats in the middle of November at Mantua, the Signoria of Florence commissioned Machiavelli to proceed there for that purpose, giving him the following instructions.

Some one will by that time have arrived in Mantua, who is duly empowered to receive the payment in question; and for your fuller information as to the course you will have to pursue, you must know that out of the whole amount one thousand ducats will have to be paid to Lante Bonifazio da Sarego, a gentleman from Verona, as provided by the terms of the treaty. All the rest is to be paid to the person sent by the Emperor to receive it. But as the matter is very generally known, it will be necessary for you to use every care and precaution to know and legitimize the person to whom you have to pay the money. You will have no great difficulty upon this point with regard to Bonifazio; but whoever comes on behalf of his Majesty the Emperor must be provided with proper and sufficient credentials. The individual who came to receive the first payment was thus provided with a royal commission authorizing the payment to be made to him; and the same ought to be the case on the present occasion. We desire you to take an acquittance from the individual himself to whom the money is paid, which must be properly attested; and moreover, we want you to have both payments formally acknowledged as public acts, as was done with regard to the first payment. Giovanni Borromei, at whose house you will probably alight, will be able to procure for you the services of the same notary. After having made the payments, you will send back to us the acquittances and other documents by the same mounted men that accompanied you to Mantua, reporting to us at the same time all that you may be able to learn respecting the Emperor's affairs, and especially everything relating to his Italian enterprise. After that you will proceed to Verona, or to wherever it may seem most convenient to you to obtain more precise information on the subject, and to communicate the same to us; and you must not leave that region until you receive orders from us, for, being once there on account of the payments, your presence will be less noted than if we were to send some one else there. During your stay in the different places, and which it would be well to change from day to day, as occasion may require, you will write to us carefully and regularly all that may occur worthy of notice; but so as to avoid all danger that might result therefrom, you will send your letters by the regular courier. We would also recommend to you and the aforementioned mounted men, that you move with great care and circumspection, and with as little display as possible.

You will also be the bearer of a letter of credence to the Right Reverend Monsignore di Gursa in connection with those payments, or any other matter where you may need him. You may present that letter to him either before or after the payments are made, according as you may find necessary. And finally you will take with you a copy of the above-mentioned royal commission, so that you may know the form in which the present one will have to be drawn up and signed.

The person to whom the first payment was made was one of his Majesty's secretaries by the name of Wolfgang Hemerle, a man of small stature, thirty to thirty-two years old, somewhat stout, with red beard and hair slightly curled. The notary who drew up the documents respecting the first payment was Ser Gabriello, son of Ser Bartolommeo d' Albo of Mantua; he could draw up the present papers the same as the first, of which we furnish you a copy. The only alteration necessary will be to state that this is for the second payment.

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LETTER I.

Magnificent and Illustrious Signori, etc. :—

I arrived here all safe on Thursday the 15th, and on the same day came Pigello Portinari, and with him Messer Antimaco, who was formerly secretary of the Marquis, but having been dismissed by him he has now become the Emperor's factotum. This same Messer Antimaco had an imperial commission to receive the payment, and therefore yesterday after dinner I counted out to him nine thousand ducats, and have now in my possession the imperial letter and an acquittance from the hands of Messer Antimaco; and a properly attested document of the whole transaction has been drawn up by the same notary who drew up the documents relating to the first payment. With Messer Antimaco there came a young man from Verona, who claimed the one thousand ducats which your Lordships' commission directs me to pay. But as he had no mandate nor letter of any kind from the principal party, and nothing but the guaranty of Messer Antimaco, I declined to pay it to him, and told him to go back for a proper mandate, and that then I would pay him; he agreed to do so, saying that he would return here to-day. I shall wait for him here, and when I get all the acquittances of these payments I will send them to your Lordships, according to your instructions, by one of the mounted men. If I could have made all the payments yesterday and sent you the acquittances, etc., I would have despatched them with this and with the enclosed letters from Francesco Pandolfini, which Giovanni Borromei, by his particular instructions, sends to you in all haste by one of the mounted men. And in that case I should have gone with Messer Antimaco and Pigello to meet the Emperor; but not having been able to make both the payments, and my commission not permitting me to do so at any other place, I remained here; and so soon as I shall have accomplished all, I will send you the documents, and then go to join the Emperor, whom Messer Antimaco told me he left on the 12th at Rovere, whence he was to proceed to Bassano, a town some twenty-five miles from Verona towards Friuli. He also told me, that the Emperor with a large army intended to attack the Venetians from that side, whilst the attempt upon Lignago would have to be made from the opposite direction, and that he himself would have to remain here some days for the purpose of ordering and buying certain necessaries for the enterprise, with a portion of the funds received in payment. And finally he told me that the Emperor had renewed his intimate relations with the king of France, and had sent him a solemn and honorable embassy. Whilst thus conversing with Messer Antimaco he talked to me in the grandest manner about the affairs of the Emperor.

Afterwards, at about the twenty-second hour, whilst we were engaged in counting the money, a mounted messenger arrived from the Bishop of Trent, who, as your Lordships know, is the governor of Verona, bearing letters to Messer Antimaco, who after having read them approached me together with Pigello, and told me that he had received information that Vicenza had revolted the day before, and that the Venetians had marched into the city; in consequence of which he had been ordered to proceed as soon as possible with the money to Verona. He gave me no further particulars, but when I went out, after having completed the payments, I found that the news was already known all over the place, but that the reports of the affair varied materially. Some said that all the troops that were in Vicenza had been stripped, and that Fracassa and the Marquis of Brandenburg had been made prisoners. Others said that the people, having risen in arms, had by common accord sent all the troops away without doing them any harm. It has been impossible for me to learn the real truth. I presume that Francesco Pandolfini will have given you more correct accounts of this affair in the letter which he despatched to you in such haste. Many apprehend that Verona may follow the example of Vicenza, and seem to think that, if she does not do so, it will be out of respect for the French, who are near by and hold some excellent fortresses that may prove very strong when properly supplied with munitions, etc.

This is all I am able to tell your Lordships at the present in relation to this matter, but so soon as I shall get to a place where I can obtain more full and reliable information, I will communicate it to your Lordships. I called yesterday morning to pay my respects to the Marchioness, but found that she rises late and gives no audience before dinner. I could not go again in the afternoon, as I was occupied until night with those payments, but will try anyhow to see her to-day.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

MANTUA, 17 November, 1509.

I do not send one of my mounted men with this, as I want one of them to carry the acquittances, etc. to you, and shall require the other to remain with me here in case I shall have to go farther.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I counted upon making the payment of the one thousand ducats to-day, and then to send your Lordships the acquittances and documents relating to both the payments; but Bonifazio's agent came back this evening from Verona, and brought a mandate so badly drawn up that our notary declared it insufficient for the payments to be made under it, or to enable him to draw up a properly attested notarial act of the transaction. Thus it had to be sent back to Verona for rectification. Seeing this fresh delay, I concluded to send Ardingo with the acquittance for the nine thousand ducats paid to Messer Antimaco, as reported to you in my letter of yesterday, which is herewith enclosed, as also the letter of the Emperor commissioning Messer Antimaco to receive the payment, and the acquittance from Messer Antimaco's own hand, and also the notarial act attesting the said payment to have been made, drawn up by the same notary who attested the first payment made by the ambassadors. Messer Antimaco declined to say in his acquittance that it relates to the second payment, although I urged it very much; he says that he had no knowledge of the first payment, and cannot refer to it upon the assurance of others, but he was willing to say in the acquittance that it was for a payment due to his Imperial Majesty in the month of November. In the notarial act, however, it is distinctly stated and several times repeated, that it relates to the second term and payment. I shall wait here until day after to-morrow to pay the one thousand ducats to the Veronese; after that I shall take Zerino with me and leave for Verona, unless something special should occur to prevent me. I shall leave the acquittance and the notarial act with Luigi Guicciardini, with instructions to take them with him to Florence and deliver them to your Lordships.

To-day I had an audience of the Marchioness, and thanked her in your Lordships' name for the honorable reception given to your ambassadors, adding all I thought proper in offering her your services, etc. She replied in the most gracious manner, thanking your Lordships a thousand times; and then, referring to the events at Vicenza, she told me that she had not yet received any particulars; that it was reported that the troops and servants of the Emperor had been sent away from there without any other harm; but that nothing had been heard yet from any other quarter. We learn from Verona that the Bishop of Trent has put some fifteen hundred Spaniards in the different forts, and that the houses were being marked for quartering French troops in the city. No one knows what course things are likely to take there, for on the one hand it is believed that the Veronese are greatly disposed to imitate the Vicenzians, and on the other hand it seems probable that they will be restrained by the forts and by the presence of the French. And yet it happens sometimes that the people are governed by their will, regardless of the results that may flow from it; and in this instance such is likely to be the case if the Emperor is really at Trent as is reported. Here, it is said that he will go to Botzen to convoke a Diet there; I do not mention this as absolutely certain, but it was stated to me by a person just from Verona as a thing likely to occur.

Giovanni Borromei thought he would have found some one to carry the letters which Francesco Pandolfini had charged him to forward; but being disappointed, he has concluded now that Ardingo will do it as well as any other who has but one horse; and therefore he has given him four ducats on condition that he shall reach Florence in two days and a half. Your Lordships will please to reimburse this amount to Lionardo Nasi, and also to reimburse the said Lionardo one and three quarters florins gold, which I have paid to the notary for drawing up the document which I send you.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quae bene valeant.*

MANTUA, 18 November, 1509.

N. B. Your Lordships will please also pay Lionardo Nisi half a ducat which Giovanni Borromei has paid to the messenger who brought him the letter of Francesco Pandolfini, according to his orders.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

LETTER III.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

The courier Ardingo left here yesterday morning with my letters to your Lordships of the 17th and 18th, in which I reported all that occurred to me of interest; he was the bearer, also, of all the documents relating to the payment of the nine thousand ducats. I write these lines merely because Giovanni Borromei is sending a special messenger to Florence by order of Francesco Pandolfini, and I was not willing to let him go without a line from me, although I have nothing new to write beyond what I have already reported. I expect the young man from Verona to-day to receive the thousand ducats; and after having made that payment I shall mount my horse and proceed myself to Verona, so as to be on the spot where all the lies originate, or rather where it rains lies, which abound even more at court than in the public square. This morning it was said, and positively affirmed everywhere, that the Emperor had entered Padua, whilst the Venetians were leaving it to go to Vicenza. As already said, so soon as I shall have paid over the thousand ducats I shall go to Verona, or wherever I can be near the Emperor, provided the roads are passable. I have nothing further to say, except to recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Mantua, 20 November, 1509. *Secret.*

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LETTER IV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

It was yesterday, and not the day before, that I left Mantua, and arrived here. I made the payment of the thousand ducats, and left the acquittance together with the power of attorney and the notarial act of the transaction with Luigi Guicciardini, with instructions to deliver them to your Lordships on his return to Florence unless he received different orders from your Lordships. The Emperor is at present at Acci, a few miles the other side of Roveredo; and it is reported that he has ordered a levy of one man per hearth in the Tyrol, with which he intends to come to the assistance of this city. His Majesty is expected here from day to day, and therefore I did not go any farther; moreover, the roads are not by any means safe, for only to-day the Venetians captured ten horsemen on the road leading to Chiusi, who were going to join the Emperor. I intend to wait for him here, where it is likely he will remain during the whole of this war. The state of things in this city is as follows: the gentlemen, feeling themselves guilty, are not adherents of St. Mark, but the citizens and the populace are altogether Venetian; and yet with all this, the day when the Venetians retook Vicenza things looked quite favorable; for at the very moment when the loss of that city became known, a fight occurred amongst some Spaniards in the public square which caused the whole city to take to arms, and reports were spread that the Venetians had entered the city. Nevertheless, none of the citizens left their houses, and no ugly demonstrations were made. There are within the city several posts that are garrisoned, which, if properly supplied, are strong enough to make a long resistance. The garrison consists of German infantry, but altogether does not amount to a thousand men. There are, moreover, some 3,500 other infantry, partly Spanish and partly Italian, and about 1,000 to 1,200 cavalry. You must bear in mind that all the German infantry and cavalry have left here, except a small force that is with the Bishop; there remain here some 1,000 or 1,200 Burgundian cavalry, and those Italians whom the Bishop had in his pay. There are, moreover, some 400 French horse here, that were sent here by the Grand Master on the loss of Vicenza; and to-day there arrived some 150 cavalry under command of a certain Count Giovan Francesco da Bergamo, also sent here by the Grand Master.

The Venetians have established their camp at San Martino, some five miles from here, where they are reported to have some five thousand paid infantry, and a large number of enraged peasants, besides all their cavalry. These have scoured the country all day to-day, and have destroyed the roads, so that I was most fortunate in having come here yesterday instead of to-day. It is supposed that the Venetians will have to make great efforts to obtain possession of this town; they are roving through the neighborhood to sound the disposition of the people, and watching to see whether some disturbances may not arise in the town that will afford them a chance to get inside. It is supposed that when they see that all this is of no use, they will come with their artillery, for they know that they will have to fight the soldiers that are in the place; although the people, if they have not shown themselves friendly to them, have at the same time shown no sign of being hostile. If they do not attack the place this evening, they will not delay it beyond Sunday, inasmuch as they cannot afford to lose any time; and unless they take this place, it will be of little advantage to them to take Vicenza; but having Verona would enable them at the same time to close the pass to the French and to the Germans, which Vicenza would not enable them to do. It is said, moreover, that the latter city is so feeble that they can retake it with the same facility with which it was taken by the Venetians. The inhabitants of the place, who have no desire to change masters, and the Germans, have placed all their hopes upon the French, and say nothing more about help from Germany. But they say that the Grand Master is coming here in person, and that he has given orders to Messer Jacopo to advance with all the men-at-arms which the King has in Lombardy, and that he has raised a body of volunteers and engaged ten thousand Swiss to come down from their mountains, and that with all these forces he will promptly retake Vicenza, and push the Venetian army back into the Gulf. Your Lordships can learn through Francesco Pandolfini whether all these preparations are really true.

I have been told here that the Grand Master has sent these few troops here merely to give the inhabitants the hope of assistance; and that he has at the same time despatched a messenger to the King (who ought to be back in nine days) to learn how his Majesty wanted him to act under the circumstances. It is not known what course the King may intend to take, and whether he may not prefer to recover what has been lost for himself, rather than defend the possessions of others. But this pass is of the greatest importance and value to any one that wants to carry on a foreign war.

This morning I had an audience of the Bishop, and explained to him the object of my coming here, and that I should remain here some time, etc. He expressed himself much pleased to see me, and praised highly your Lordships' fidelity to your engagements in making the payments, etc. I have been told privately by a trustworthy person, that, if Verona is this day in the possession of the Emperor, it is due to the nine thousand ducats, and that he will always acknowledge it. I hope your Lordships will take note of this, so that you may be able to remind him of it in future times, in case circumstances should change; for it is really true, as I have been told, and as I now write to you.

I do not send Zerino, for I do not think it well for me to remain here with only Marcone. True, I spend more than the one ducat per day that is allowed me as salary; nevertheless, as in the past, so shall I be in the future always satisfied with whatever your Lordships may be disposed to do for me. I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servus

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

VERONA, 22 November, 1509. *Secret.*

LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

Day before yesterday, which was the 22d, I wrote to your Lordships all I had been able to learn up to that time in relation to matters here; I sent that letter to Giovanni Borromei, at Mantua, but having resolved this morning to send the courier Zerino back to Florence, I have ordered him to see Giovanni at Mantua and get my letter from him and take it himself to Florence; and assuming it to have reached you safely, I do not repeat what I wrote in that letter.

The Venetian army, which, as I stated in my last, had been encamped at San Martino, some five miles from here, withdrew from there yesterday and moved in the direction of Vicenza. They say that this was done because they did not see that any movement whatever was being made here; and that they did not advance farther out of consideration for the French. And although, as I said in my last, the French were but few in number, yet the Venetians did not want to open actual hostilities against a place where the French were, as they did not wish to irritate the King, and thus cause him to push his enterprise against them with greater vigor. No one is bold enough to venture even a conjecture as to what the result of all this is going to be. It is true, it is known that the king of France is very desirous of having this city, and that many of the citizens and gentlemen are equally willing that he should have it, and that the Emperor does not seem sufficiently strong at this time either to defend or guard the city; things cannot therefore remain long as they are, for in a very short time the people here will die of hunger unless the French help them with provisions as well as with arms. How these two sovereigns will arrange matters between them can only be judged of by events; nothing is heard of any negotiations here. Your Lordships may be able to obtain more light on the subject from Francesco Pandolfini.

As I have already written, the Emperor is at Acci, a short distance from Roveredo, where it is said he is waiting to raise troops with which to come here; and had it not been for this trouble at Vicenza, he would now be at Innspruck. It is quite possible that the retreat of the Venetians may induce him to undertake this journey for some good purpose, of which, however, nothing is known, although his Majesty is expected here hourly with his troops. Unless otherwise ordered I shall not leave here, for where the Emperor now is he does not want any ambassador or any one else near him. Thus the French and Aragonese ambassadors who were with him have been sent back to Trent, where they now are. I believe that, for the purpose of fully understanding all these manœuvres, it is better for me to remain here than to go to Trent. One thing only could induce me to go there, and that would be the hope of securing those privileges which the Emperor promised under the treaty, and which have not yet been obtained. But as your Lordships did not say anything to me about it when I left Florence, nor have written to me since on that subject, I do not know whether it would be well or otherwise for me now to claim them. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

VERONA, 24 November, 1509. *Secret.*

Messer Pigello asks to remind your Lordships of his services, and his affairs in Rome.

LETTER VI.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

Since my arrival here I have written twice to your Lordships, on the 22d and 24th, which Zerino will have delivered to you. Nothing of moment has occurred since then, unless it be that this place is every day becoming more and more filled with troops. One thousand Gascons arrived yesterday from Peschiera; and to-day two hundred men-at-arms arrived, also French; and a large number of infantry and cavalry are reported at Peschiera, which are to come here within a couple of days under command of the Grand Master, at which time the Emperor is also expected; and it is said that after these arrivals the army will move forward to avenge the sins of Vicenza. The soldiers are eagerly looking forward to this move, in the hopes of plunder; for the weakness of the place promises great gain, with little fatigue and even less danger. We do not hear that the Venetians have fortified the place, or that they have made any other extraordinary provision, but are established with their troops in certain little castles around the city. The soldiers here are occupying themselves with plundering and ravaging the country around, and we see and hear daily of the most unexampled and extraordinary things, so that the minds of the country people are filled with a desire for death and vengeance, and they have become more obstinate and furious against the enemies of the Venetians than ever the Jews were against the Romans; and it happens almost daily that some one of them that is taken prisoner, allows himself to be killed rather than disown the name of Venetian. It was only yesterday evening that one of them was brought before the Bishop, saying that he was a Marchesco,* and would die a Marchesco, and did not wish to live as anything else; so that the Bishop ordered him to be hung; and neither the offer of letting him go free, nor any other offer, could induce this man to change his determination. Thus, all things considered, it would seem impossible that these sovereigns should be able to hold this country so long as these peasants live. I really do not know whether after the loss of Vicenza they will attempt anything else, nor do I know under what conditions the king of France comes in this direction with such considerable forces. Upon these points I must refer your Lordships to what Francesco Pandolfini may have written you, who, being here so much longer than myself, and near more communicative persons, ought to have learned some of the particulars. The Bishop of Gursa is not with the Emperor, but, according to what I hear, has gone back to Germany to procure some money.

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* *Marchesco,* an adherent of St. Mark, or of Venice.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Verona, 26 November 1509.

I send this to Giovanni Borromei at Mantua, who will forward it by the first courier whom he despatches.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret.

LETTER VII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote you last on the 26th and sent it to Giovanni Borromei at Mantua, with instructions to forward it with his first despatches, and I shall do the same with this. Since my last some two hundred men-at-arms arrived here, part French and part Italian, and sent here by Chaumont; amongst them is Tarlatino with his company. Every one here now is full of curiosity to know what so considerable a force is going to do here. The Emperor and the Grand Master were to have met at Obsolengo; the latter had been already for three days at Peschiera. After uniting their forces, they are to decide as to the manner in which this war is to be carried on. I have made every effort to find out whether the king of France claims any compensation from the Emperor for carrying on this war, or whether he really does it without compensation, deeming it sufficient gain to keep the enemy at a distance from his frontiers, and thus deprive the population, which is anyhow not very loyal, of the opportunity to rebel. But I have not yet been able to obtain any information upon this point satisfactory to myself, for I do not believe that there is any one here that knows anything about it; and those with whom I have talked on the subject take very high ground, and say that the Emperor Maximilian will not give the king of France a single battlement of all that belongs to him; and that he ought to be satisfied to have the states of the Emperor as a shield to his possessions, and allow himself to be trampled under foot first; and that the king of France is obliged to undertake this defence, inasmuch as he thereby defends his own state more advantageously and more securely in keeping the enemy at a distance than by waiting until he is on his frontiers. They seem to think that France is necessarily obliged to take this course. We must wait now to see how the King himself views the matter. All I can say to your Lordships is, that this country cannot long remain in the present condition; for the longer these sovereigns protract this war, the more ardent will the desire of these country people become to return under the dominion of their original masters; for the inhabitants of the city are devoured by the troops quartered in their houses, whilst those who live outside of the city are plundered and killed. The Venetians, who are aware of all this, act just in the contrary way, causing everything to be respected both within and without the city, to a degree that is almost incredible on the part of such an armed multitude; thus, if these two sovereigns trifle with each other, and do not make a prompt and vigorous war, it may give rise to events that will cause these cities to return to their former allegiance with more alacrity than they broke from it.

Two days ago the Emperor was at the place which I mentioned to your Lordships in my last letter. Fracassa came here yesterday; and it is said that the Emperor will make him commander of the Italian troops in place of the Signor Costantino, who is reported as returning to Rome in consequence of having had a dispute with Monseigneur de la Palisse, of such a nature that the latter sent him a challenge. Thus, to avoid having anything to do with the French, Costantino returns to Rome, not leaving a very high opinion of himself behind.

The Venetians have scattered their troops over a distance of some twelve miles, and their Stradiotes often come within a couple of miles of this city. It was only yesterday that they took more than a hundred horses from the enemy's teamsters, so that to-day these teamsters did not venture out into the country without an escort of more than five hundred cavalry. There are now here 4,500 infantry, and 2,500 horse, of which some 200 are French; 4,000 German infantry are expected here to-morrow, and the Emperor is also looked for, after he shall have met and conferred with the Grand Master.

I have no further news to commuicate, but recommend myself to your Lordships, *quœ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

VERONA, 29 November, 1509. *Secret.*

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LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 29th ultimo, and sent the letter to Giovanni Borromei at Mantua. I wrote again very briefly yesterday, and sent it to your Lordships by one of the Pope's couriers who was going to Florence; in that letter I advised you of the arrival of the Emperor's agent, together with the Signor Costantino. This present letter I shall send you by Messer Francesco da Santa Fiore, Pandolfo Petrucci's secretary, who returns by way of Florence. I avail myself of this opportunity to give you the news that the meeting of the Emperor with the Grand Master did not take place. Nevertheless the Grand Master was yesterday at Peschiera, and the Emperor left Arco to go to Trent, which seems rather a bad way of getting here. Some three thousand German infantry came here to-day; they are said to be a part of the garrison of Vicenza. I do not see that any other troops arrive, and learn from persons coming from Innspruck that there are none on the road, and that nothing is said there of any troops that are to come here. The Bishop Lieutenant, desiring to relieve the city, at the request of the inhabitants, and believing himself that there were troops enough here to warrant their going out into the country to be quartered in some of the neighboring castles, whence they could press the enemy and at the same time relieve the city, requested the French troops that are here to do so; but they replied that they would not leave the city to advance without orders from the Grand Master. As chance would have it, news came at the same time that the Emperor had sent the Signor Lodovico da Gonzaga to Monseigneur de Chaumont with a similar request, and that the latter had made a similar reply; namely, that without fresh orders from the King he would not make his troops go beyond Verona. Thus the Imperialists are beginning to talk very disparagingly about the French; say that the Emperor will make terms with the Venetians, and drive the French out of Italy. Consequently, the whole of last night the French troops in the city remained under arms and on horseback; and some of the gentlemen here were greatly afraid that the French would return this morning to Peschiera, and that on the day after the Venetians would come back here. And yet to-day all seems to be arranged, but how it was done I know not. The French captains have had a long consultation with the Bishop, but the result of it is not yet made public. But we see as it were from a distance that here are two sovereigns, one of which has the ability to make war, but is not willing, whilst the other is willing but lacks the ability; and the one who is able trifles away his time. Would to God that he pushed matters energetically, for if he reflects to what point the desperation of the inhabitants here goes, he must feel that he cannot be prompt enough in removing from their sight the army upon which they base all their hopes, and fix all their thoughts. And if he continues by his present proceedings to keep up the desperation of the people of this country, and to keep alive the Venetians, then, as I have before remarked, it may at any moment give rise to events that will make the King and the Pope, as well as ourselves, repent that we have not done our duty at the right time.

This community has to-day sent two ambassadors to the Emperor to represent to him the condition in which they are at present, and their apprehensions. They are awaiting their return, which will be of importance, even if it should not lead to any change in the state of things. There is talk of a Diet to be held at Kempten, a place three days' journey beyond Innspruck, and it is thought that perhaps the Emperor may be present in person. The Venetians are seizing as many castles as they please in this neighborhood, and it is stated that they have done a great deal of damage in the territory of Ferrara, and that they still continue to do so. But as I suppose that your Lordships will have fuller information in relation to this from Ferrara, I shall not attempt to give you any details of this. Furthermore, it is reported to-day that the Venetians have taken a number of galleys up the river Po, and that the Duke of Ferrara has had rocks sunk in the rear of these galleys, so that they will not be able to return without risk of being wrecked; and that they are waiting for the French troops to lay their hands upon these galleys.

If the Emperor stops at Trent, I may perhaps go there, unless your Lordships recall me before, which I entreat you to do; for the Emperor does not permit any one to remain near him; and if I am to remain at a distance from him, I might as well be at Florence as here, particularly as Francesco Pandolfini is near here and can keep your Lordships fully informed of everything that is going on here, as he has intimate relations with men, etc.

Servitor,
Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret.

Verona, December 1, 1509.

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LETTER IX.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday and sent the letter by Messer Francesco da Santa Fiore, Pandolfo Petrucci's secretary, who was returning to Florence. You will have learned from that letter that the French had been much maligned on the day previous, because they had refused to advance when so requested; and that they had been kept on foot the whole day, but that on the following morning matters seem to have been made up. I hear to-day that the cause of the dispute was that the Grand Master had demanded possession of Valleggio, a fortress situated on the Mincio, and which together with Peschiera commands the entire river. The French, wishing to obtain possession of this post, which they regarded as very important, as indeed it is, wanted on this occasion to try and make themselves masters of it; rumor says now that the matter is about to be adjusted. But what the French propose to do when they get possession of this fortress I do not know for certain, as the different reports about it vary very much. Some say that they pledge themselves to hold the place for the Emperor until such time as he shall be in condition to advance farther. Others maintain that they have promised to aid that sovereign in his attempt against Vicenza with 5,000 Swiss and 800 lances; but I cannot say which of these two versions is true; but whether they arrange the matter one way or the other, we shall soon see what it will result in.

This is all the news I have to communicate to your Lordships. Of the Emperor we hear nothing more than what I wrote in my last to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself most humbly. *Valete!*

Servitor,

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Verona, 2 December, 1509. *Secret.*

LETTER X.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last was of the 2d; I sent it through Giovanni Borromei, whom I also charge with this one. I stated to your Lordships that the French wanted to have the castle of Valleggio placed in their hands in case they were to serve the Emperor, etc. "And "soon after the Emperor sent letters to the castle of Valleggio "ordering that fortress to be transferred to the king of France; "which the commandant however was not willing to do; in "consequence of which the French wanted to leave again. So "that when this state of things became known to the Bishop, "he sent a messenger this morning to the commandant of the "castle with a letter ordering him to hand the place over to the "French, and that on his return he would see whether it had "been done." The two ambassadors who, as I told you, had been sent by this city to the Emperor, have returned; they have filled the whole city with the brightest hopes, telling the people on behalf of his Majesty to be of good cheer, as he would be here very shortly with a powerful army, with which he confidently expects to terminate this war in the least possible time; so that everybody is delighted and has the highest expectations. These ambassadors report that they have left the Emperor between St. Michele and Botzen, some eighteen miles the other side of Trent; although it is said to-day that he is at Botzen attending with greatest diligence to all that can be done. "There "are about 8,000 infantry here, Germans and others, and about "2,500 horse; and there are scattered here some 20,000 country people and strangers, which brings the population of the "place to some 45,000. These consume every day 1,500 measures (*mannali*) of grain and a proportionate quantity of wine;

"there is provision enough here for about two months. But "the inhabitants of the place are poorly qualified to make further provision, and the Emperor cannot do everything." . . . .

On this side the Venetians continue to scour and ravage the country, whilst the French confine themselves carefully to guarding this city. The Grand Master has returned within the last few days to Brescia, but is reported to have since gone back to Peschiera, it is supposed for the reasons which I have before mentioned to your Lordships. Nothing further occurs to me to say except to recommend myself to your Lordships. I learn that in all the places of which the Venetians make themselves masters, they cause the image of St. Mark to be painted, but with a sword in hand instead of a book; from which it would seem that they have learned to their cost that books and study do not suffice for the preservation of states. *Valete!*

Verona, 7 December, 1509.

I have forgotten to mention to your Lordships, that on the 4th instant at about the twentieth hour some Spaniards attempted to force open a house in one of the suburbs called San Zeno, and the occupants defended themselves; whereupon one of the inhabitants of the suburbs rushed to the bell-tower and sounded the tocsin. In a few minutes the whole city was in arms, which was a dangerous thing, as it was some time before the real cause of the tumult was found out. But so soon as it was known the alarm subsided, and the individual who had sounded the tocsin was seized and hung. During this tumult all the German troops were on foot and assembled together, so that their number could readily be seen, and I counted eighteen banners, being about three hundred infantry per banner. When the tumult ceased, these troops returned and were quartered in the street of San Stefano within the town, directly under the foot of San Piero. They had previously been quartered outside of the city, but the term of these quarters had expired. In fine, this city continues in a state of alarm, and more especially the people from the country; and every day orders are published directing them to present themselves at a fixed hour before the Bishop. *Valete iterum!*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret.

LETTER XI.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I wrote last to your Lordships yesterday, and send that letter at the same time with this one. The envoy who was sent to hand Castel Valleggio over to the French has not yet returned, and therefore I cannot explain to your Lordships how the thing passed off. It is true, everybody says that the place has been given up. Reason demanded that they should not delay too long before advancing, if they wished to benefit the city and be useful to the army, and at the same time do harm to the enemy; for there are troops enough here, and more arrive every day. Only yesterday evening several hundred Gascon infantry arrived from Peschiera. The Spaniards that are here have received money from the French, so that there is really nothing wanting for the advance of the troops except the final orders; and, as I have already said, it is important that these should be received without delay. For it is known that the Venetians are making intrenchments, which, if allowed to be completed, will make it very difficult, in the opinion of persons familiar with the country, to annoy the Venetians during the winter in the direction of Vicenza. The Duke of Ferrara will also have need that the Venetians should be restrained in that direction, so that they may not attack him at their convenience, as they have done within the past few days, of which attack different accounts have been given here; but knowing that your Lordships will have been fully advised of all the particulars by the Duke's ambassador, I shall say nothing more about it.

This evening I had a conversation with a person just from Botzen, who had left there the day before yesterday; and this individual told me that he had left the Emperor there, who had made known his intention of leaving for Innspruck. The strangers who are in the habit of following the court remain at Trent, with orders not to leave, but to await him there, unless differently ordered by him.

I believe that if Chaumont comes here he will be accompanied by Francesco Pandolfini, who can keep your Lordships advised of what is going on here. In that case my remaining here would be quite useless; nor would it be of any advantage to your Lordships that I should go to Innspruck to follow the Emperor; for it is evident that his Majesty wants no one near him to watch his movements. And as to the payments that remain yet to be made, the Emperor will no doubt have negotiated them at Trent, so that whoever is to receive the money will come direct to your Lordships at Florence. Thus my remaining here will be in every point of view superfluous; and I shall wait here to learn by your first letter what course I am to take. I am the more anxious to receive that letter, as I have not heard once from your Lordships since I left Florence.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

VERONA, 8 December, 1509.

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LETTER XII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Besides my other letters, I have written to your Lordships on the 2d, 7th, and 8th, and as these have not yet been forwarded by Giovanni Borromei, they will now be sent together with this one. The agent whom the Bishop had sent to Valleggio returned here on the 9th, and reports having handed that place over to the French, with the promise on their part to restore it at any moment on demand of the Emperor. He has made two inventories of the artillery and the munitions in the place, of which one copy has been left with the French and the other he has brought here with him. The French are now urged to march, but they reply that they are waiting for their infantry and for certain necessaries for the transport of the artillery. I hear also from a good source that, with the view of leaving this city in the rear with the greater safety, they demand one of the forts to be placed in their hands, and that the Bishop will hand the citadel over to them.

Now to enable your Lordships more fully to understand when you hear this city spoken of at any time hereafter, you must know that Verona bears some resemblance to Florence. For the city walls take in a portion of the hill, and the river Adige, which takes its rise in the mountains of Germany and runs near and parallel to the Lago di Garda, does not spread into the plain, but turns to the left, and, skirting close along the mountains, divides the city of Verona in such wise that, looking towards Germany, a portion of the plain and the entire hill slope are on the other side of the Adige; and all the rest of the city, that looks towards Mantua, is on this side of the river. But very soon after leaving Verona the river turns from the mountains and takes its course through the plain. On the height, and as it were near the gate of San Giorgio, is the fort called San Piero; and somewhat higher up and about two bowshots' length from this fort, and on the very summit of the hill, there is another fort, called San Felice. These two forts are guarded by the Germans, and if they were lost the city would be almost defenceless; but they are very strong, owing to their situation rather than to the strength of the walls. On this side of the Adige looking towards Mantua, where the country becomes level, as has been said, there are two other forts, one towards Peschiera, which is called the old castle, and the other towards Vicenza, which is called the citadel; these are about three bowshots distant from each other, and the outer wall of the city, running from one to the other, forms a half-circle. Besides this there is an inner wall running straight from the old castle to the citadel, and having a deep ditch on each side. In the space between the two walls and the two forts there are a number of houses, constituting the quarter of the Borgo di San Zeno. In this Borgo, or suburb, a portion of the French troops are quartered; but not satisfied with this, they also wanted the citadel, in which the Spanish troops are quartered. This explanation shows your Lordships of what portion of Verona the French are masters. The gentlemen continue to manifest the same disposition which I have mentioned in a former letter to your Lordships; their actual situation is bad, and they apprehend worse, seeing the unstable and changeable character of the Emperor, and that the Venetians are acting with renewed vigor, and that the whole country is favorable to the latter. They are consequently occupying themselves with great solicitude in removing their goods and chattels and their wives and children to Mantua. They still look hopefully, however, for the coming of Chaumont, who, as I have said above, is only waiting for his infantry and artillery to arrive, after which he will immediately come here.

I have mentioned to your Lordships that I had heard that the Emperor had left Botzen for Innspruck. Since then we have positive news of his being at Augsburg, where he has convoked a Diet, so as to have everything in order to enable him to act with vigor in the spring. At this news all the followers of the court that were at Verona, and had remained here only because they were in doubt where to find the Emperor, or what they ought to do, have left here suddenly for that city. Thus, when I perceived this, I thought it well to come as far as here, where I arrived yesterday, and to send an express to your Lordships. And to do this without involving your Lordships in any extra expense I have chosen Marcone, my steward, for that purpose, so that you may inform me through him what you wish me to do now. Your Lordships' predecessors had told me orally, that whenever the Emperor returned to Germany I should come back to Florence; nevertheless, I desire to have your Lordships' special instructions upon this point, and beg you will be pleased to give me leave to return; for there seems to me no necessity for my going to Augsburg to learn the decisions of the Diet, which will not differ from those of the previous Diets. Moreover, the Emperor, unlike other princes, is averse to having the envoys of other sovereigns about him, and either dismisses those that come, or confines them to some special locality which he does not permit them to leave without his orders. Thus we see that he has ordered all those who were with him at Trent to remain there, and not to leave without his permission. As to my staying here for the purpose of learning what is going on, that seems to me equally unnecessary, for, as everything will have to pass through the hands of Chaumont, Francesco Pandolfini will always be able to give you earlier and better information than any one else. I therefore reiterate my request to be recalled, for you have it always in your power, in the event of the Emperor's return here, or for any other reason, to send me back here. Should, however, your Lordships decide differently, then I pray that you will send back with my steward Marcone, who is the bearer of this, the courier Ardingo; for I require some one here who knows the country, and whom I can despatch to you so soon as the decisions of the Diet are known, which you could not expect otherwise, nor could you receive my letters, unless your Lordships are willing to incur the expense of keeping couriers passing regularly to and fro, as was done in the time of Francesco Vettori.

I must beg your Lordships also to send me money enough to pay my expenses for at least two or three months, including my servants and three horses, and to enable me, in case of need, to buy or change a horse, for in these places there is no one willing to help another with a sou. I again recommend myself to your Lordships, and beg you will send back Marcone with a prompt reply. I had forgotten to say, that of the fifty ducats which I received at Florence I have only eight left, which is all the money I have. *Valete!*

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.
MANTUA, 12 December, 1509.

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LETTER XIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships on the 12th, and sent it by my steward Marcone, and await your answer here. To-day Zerino came back from Brescia; and it is understood that the Grand Master will leave next Wednesday for Milan, which is just the contrary of what was expected when I left Verona. Matters do not seem to be pushed with the proper energy, for neither the Emperor nor the Grand Master is here, and I really do not see how the troops can take the field without the presence of either the one or the other; nor can I see, if they do not take the field, how the troops can remain many days longer in Verona, for this large number of troops will cause a famine, and a small number would expose the city to a thousand dangers. So that one cannot remain here with any degree of security; especially if we have to fear that which your Lordships in your letters of the 8th and 9th seem to apprehend. Nevertheless, I am ready to stay in any place you may indicate, there to await your Lordships' commands as to what I am to do. Marcone will not have left Florence when Zerino arrives; you will thus be able to deliberate anew upon the course which you may desire me to take.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.
MANTUA, 16 December, 1509.

THIRD MISSION TO THE COURT OF FRANCE.*

INSTRUCTIONS

FROM PIERO SODERINI, GONFALONIERE, TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

2 June, 1510.†

After having executed all that the Ten have commissioned you to do, you will say to his Majesty the king, on my part, that I have no other desire in the world but three things, namely, the glory of God, the happiness of my country, and the welfare and honor of his Majesty the king of France. And as I cannot believe that my country can be happy without the glory and prosperity of the crown of France, I do not value the one without the other. You will also assure his Majesty, that my brother the Cardinal is inspired by the same feelings and opinions as myself; and if he has failed in his duty to call and pay his homage to his Majesty, it is because the Pope has never been willing to give him permission to do so; and that he is bound to show all respect and obedience to his first master, who combines with his great authority so violent and impetuous a disposition that even princes are obliged to treat him with deference. Thus my brother must be held excused, and you must make his excuses, and recommend him to his Majesty the king. You will, moreover, say to his Majesty that my sole desire is that he may maintain and increase his credit and power in Italy; but to do this he must keep the Venetians down, and preserve his good relations with the Emperor of Germany, as he has done until now. And if it were possible, it would be an admirable thing to induce the king of Hungary to make war upon the Venetians in Dalmatia; for if they were to lose that province they would be completely ruined, and the king need not fear that they will ever recover from it. But if this cannot be done, you will nevertheless urge his Majesty to continue to cause them all possible expenses in that direction by protracting the war as he has done hitherto, so as to exhaust the Venetians as much as possible. For if his Majesty desires to secure his possessions in Italy, he must give his attention mainly to two points; the one to preserve friendly relations with the Emperor, and the other to continue to harass and enfeeble the Venetians. If he does this, he will have the Pope and Spain for him, for the one has no good troops, and the other is not in a situation to do him any harm. You must make his Majesty understand how sorry I am that the Pope is likely to employ Swiss troops, and that his Majesty must do all in his power to prevent it, as that would make it easier for him to keep the Pope down and to temporize with him. For if the Pope adds the support of the Swiss to the advantages which his money gives him and to his own personal character, it would make him too strong and audacious, and might lead to disastrous results. You will add, that according to my judgment his Majesty ought to make every effort not to break with the Pope; for even if a Pope's friendship is of no great value, yet his enmity may do great harm, through the influence of the Church, and because you cannot make direct war upon him without provoking the enmity of the whole world. It is of importance to the king, therefore, to keep on good terms with the pontiff, which ought not to be difficult on account of the Pope's not having many firm supporters on whom he can rely.

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* This mission of Machiavelli to France relates to the first movements of Pope Julius II. against the French. The Pope had been the originator of the celebrated League of Cambray against the Venetians; but as those had been completely crushed by the French at Vaila, the jealousy of Julius II. was excited by this victory and the advantages which France secured by the terms of the treaty with the league. He became suddenly reconciled to the Venetians, and formed an alliance with that republic; and thenceforward he directed all his efforts against the French, with the view of driving them out of Italy. The republic of Florence feared to become compromised in the war which was about to break out between the king of France, Louis XII., and Pope Julius II. Machiavelli was sent to France mainly for the purpose of having Florence released from openly furnishing assistance to the French, and at the same time to relieve the republic of the suspicion of having become alienated from France, and of having an understanding with the Pope. Machiavelli remained at the court of France until he was replaced by Robert Acciaiuoli, who was sent there as ambassador.

For particulars relating to the war which resulted in consequence, see Guicciardini, Lib. IX., Buonaccorsi's Diary, and other historians of that period.

† The instructions from the Magistracy of the Ten to Machiavelli have not been found.

And if the Pope's enmity can do him no harm, yet it may cause him to incur very heavy expenditures.

As to the Emperor, I have told you above, that I think it important that the king should temporize with him; and if the king, whilst incurring such heavy expenses out of love for the Emperor, were to ask him to cede Verona to him by way of compensation, I should very much desire him to do so, as it would more effectually secure to the king his possessions in Italy. But if this cannot be brought about, then you will suggest, on my part, that there is a third way that might be adopted; namely, to hand Verona over to some private gentleman, so that it would belong neither to the king nor the Emperor. Should this be done, it will afterwards be more easy for the king to get possession of it; for whoever is master of it will always find himself obliged to act according to the wishes of his more powerful neighbor.

You will call his Majesty's attention to the fact that extraordinary fortifications are being built at Serezana, which if done by his order would be all very well, but if done without his knowledge then he ought to be informed of it, as it is a matter of much importance. And finally you will recommend me a thousand times to his Majesty.

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LETTER I.

Magnificent and Illustrious Signori, etc.: —

I arrived here to-day and found your Lordships' two letters of the 26th and 29th ultimo, containing further advices as to the state of things in Italy; which I will communicate on my arrival at court, and make such use of as your Lordships direct and according as matters may have more or less changed during the six or seven days which it will yet take for me to get to the court. After my arrival there, I shall advise your Lordships fully of all I can learn as to how matters are going on here.

I have heard that the Bishop of Tivoli, the Pope's ambassador, left here two days ago to go to the court, where he had been sent with all possible speed by the Pope to make known to the king the reasons for his having arrested Monseigneur d'Auch. Some one who met the Bishop on the road told me that he went most reluctantly to the court because he expected to have to treat of rather unpleasant matters; this person also learned from the Bishop that the king of Spain had a powerful fleet in Sicily, with ten thousand or more troops on board, which he kept there with the intention of employing them in case of need, either for his own use or for that of his allies in Italy. Your Lordships can learn from other sources with more certainty whether this be true or not. As for myself nothing could make me believe it if I saw the Pope less resolute against the French; but as his boldness must have some other support besides his mere sanctity, this sort of preparations must necessarily be true, or at least likely to become true.

Besides my duty of keeping your Lordships advised from day to day of what I learn here, I have nothing of importance to attend to excepting what relates to the presents that were promised at the conclusion of the late treaty with the king, as your Lordships may remember. It was for this reason that I remained so long on the road with Alessandro Nasi, so as to learn from him where those things were, and what I would have to do in the matter. He has fully informed me upon every point, and, as your Lordships will have learned all particulars from him, it is not necessary for me to repeat them here, and I shall confine myself to giving you merely the substance; namely, that by orders from the office in Florence he had promised to pay to Robertet and to Chaumont the amount due them at the next fair in August; and as they count upon this promise, it will have to be fulfilled. Nasi told me moreover that he did not think that the city could possibly exempt itself from the payment of the ten thousand ducats that had been sent here for account of the Cardinal d'Amboise, which had not been paid in consequence of the Cardinal's death, and for the reasons which Nasi has made known to you.* And that he saw only one way to save that money, or at least to defer the payment of it for some time; and that was to divide the ten thousand ducats between the two above-named personages, as so much on account of their portion, and that this might probably satisfy them in full for what they have to receive; at any rate, it would remove from before their eyes this bait, which would attract their attention and desire so long as it was there. But the paying the amount over to them would either cause the matter not to be spoken of any more, or it would anyhow be a great convenience to your Lordships in making the payments. Your Lordships must therefore write me how I am to act in this matter, in case I should be spoken to on the subject. I shall leave here for the court in a couple of days, and will thence report at length to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

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* The Cardinal d'Amboise, Archbishop of Rouen, had died at Lyons on the 25th of May, 1510.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

LYONS, 7 July, 1510.

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LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I arrived here yesterday evening, but as it was at a late hour I did not make my arrival known to any one. This morning, however, I called upon Robertet, and explained to him the object of my coming. I treated him with all the ceremony and politeness due to so good a friend of our republic; and he manifested pleasure at my mission, telling me that I had come just in time, as his Majesty was on the point of sending an envoy to Florence to ascertain your Lordships' intentions towards him; and that he had taken umbrage at Marc Antonio's having been allowed to leave, and at the recall of your ambassador without his being at once replaced by another to attend to these matters; that it was necessary, therefore, to efface this alienation by acts of kindness; and that his Majesty would let me know his intentions, which I ought promptly to communicate to your Lordships by a special courier. I replied to his Lordship in suitable terms, justifying your Lordships, etc.; and to prove to him that in the Marc Antonio business you had been undecided up to the 26th of the past month, I read to him the letter which you had written to me that very day; and thus with the truth it was easy for me to excuse your Lordships completely. I told him of the pass which you had given to Marc Antonio to go to Bologna, and the reasons that had induced you to do it; to which Robertet promptly replied, that it was not to Bologna, but to Genoa, that Marc Antonio wanted to go.* I assured him that I had no knowledge whatever of that; "although by your letter of the 10th instant I was informed of the whole; but if he had learned that your Lordships had been in doubt whether you ought to refuse this "pass to Marc Antonio and the Pope's troops for Genoa, they "would have thought they had discovered your intentions fully, "and therefore I deemed it well that they should have the "proposition and the reply here at the same time," which, in whatever manner your Lordships may make it, will, I think, facilitate the reply which you will have to make to what I shall tell you further on.

I was afterwards introduced to his Majesty the king, and after presenting my credentials I stated to his Majesty in the most friendly and becoming language the object of my mission, and notified him of the appointment of an ambassador, who would be here so soon as the distinguished character of the individual and the condition of the roads and the seasons would permit. And I then entreated his Majesty to consider all these little things as merely ordinary matters, as in reality they were, and nothing else; and that a pass given to Marc Antonio did not deserve to excite hard thoughts and complaints against your Lordships, inasmuch as all your past acts were not such as deserved suspicions of this kind.

His Majesty received me most graciously, and said that he felt assured of your good faith and affection towards his person, for you had received many benefits at his hand that had been of great advantage to you, but that the time had come now to be more particularly assured of your feelings towards him; and then he said: "Secretary, I have no enmity either "with the Pope or any one else; but as every day gives rise "to new friendships as well as enmities, I desire that your "Signori declare themselves without delay as to what and how "much they will do in my favor if it should happen that either "the Pope or any one else were to molest or attempt to molest "my possessions in Italy. Therefore send an express at once, "so that I may have a prompt reply, which they may make by "letter or by word of mouth, as they may think proper. But I

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* Marc Antonio had been sent by the Pope to stir up the city of Genoa against the king of France; but he did not succeed in the attempt, and came very near being taken prisoner and stripped.

" want to know who are my friends and who my enemies; and " say to your Signori, that in return I offer them for the safety " of their state all the forces of my kingdom, and if need be I " will come myself."

His Majesty charged me again to communicate this promptly to your Lordships, and to ask for an immediate reply; and told me to prepare this despatch together with Robertet. I replied to his Majesty that I had nothing to say in answer to what he had said to me, except that I would write to your Lordships with all the diligence which he had charged me to employ. I thought I could safely assure him that your Lordships were incapable of failing in the strict compliance with the stipulations of the treaty concluded with his Majesty, and that you were ready to do all that was reasonable and possible. To which his Majesty replied, that he had no doubts on that point, but that he wanted still more positive assurance. I also spoke to his Majesty of the sending of Tommaso to Venice, and of the object of his mission, to which he seemed to attach but little importance.

After this I accompanied Robertet to his lodgings, and remained some little time with him; he repeated to me the same thing that the king had said to me about writing to you, and we agreed that I should bring the letters to him, and that he would forward them by the king's post to Lyons, and that I should arrange to have them sent from there by a special courier. I have accordingly written to that effect to Bartolommeo Panciatichi, and your Lordships will please to reimburse him the expense, of which he will inform you. Robertet touched again briefly upon the subjects of the ambassador and Marc Antonio; and although he was convinced of the truth of what I had told him, yet he observed that you had many enemies here, who promptly seized every opportunity to calumniate you; and therefore it was well in these times not to give them the chance to speak ill of you; and that it was important that they should be informed here by the first courier that the ambassador had already started, and that your Lordships should act towards Marc Antonio in such a manner as to show that his arrangement with the Pope had not been made with your consent, and that he remained on Lucchese territory, or was going elsewhere. " He then broached the subject of Genoese " matters, and spoke of the favors which the Lucchese had “shown to certain exiles, and how much they had helped in “stirring up a revolution in Genoa;” but that the king was resolved to pay them for this, and that it would be well for you to think of this, as in troubles of that sort there was always something to be gained. He told me furthermore, that as soon as matters became so hot as to cause any apprehensions, the king would come down into Italy as quickly as any private person, even if it were in midwinter, and that then he would make no terms with any one that had shown himself hostile to him except at the point of the sword. These were times, therefore, when one ought to know how to take a resolution, particularly as experience had so often shown the king's readiness for war, the strength and resources of this kingdom, the fortunate success of his enterprises, and his friendly disposition towards our city and government. So that any one not blinded by passion must see clearly that there was nothing that could interfere with the prosperity of France and the success of the king's enterprises, except the king's death, for which there were no reasonable grounds for apprehension at the present. “I recommend you, therefore, once more to write to your Signori “that these are times when much can be gained by making “one's self agreeable.”

There is here at this moment a great embassy from the king of England, which is going to Rome. I have not been able to learn the object of it, but Robertet tells me, and I learn the same from others, that these ambassadors have made a general address to the king in presence of the principal nobles of the realm, in which they spoke in the most forcible manner of the strong friendship and union existing between their sovereign and the king of France; and that they had gone so far as to say that their sovereign esteemed the king of France to that degree that he looked upon him almost as his father. After this long interview I left Robertet.

In your Lordships' letter of the 29th, you express a wish to know upon what the Pope founds the arrogance with which he acts towards the French. According to what I have been able to learn in the short time that I am here, no one knows anything positive about it, and therefore they mistrust everything and everybody. “Your Lordships see what they do to satisfy “themselves as to your intentions, and they ought even to do “more, and as promptly as possible to ascertain the intentions "of other states." I learn from a friend, what, however, is only conjecture, that the support upon which the Pope relies with most confidence at present is his money and the Swiss; and that he counts upon his authority to carry Spain and the Emperor along with him. From Spain he must have received good promises; for it was seen that in his enterprise against Bologna he left Rome without having concluded anything definite either with France or any other power, and yet by his sole audacity and authority he carried them all along with him.

For once, however, the rupture between the Pope and the king of France may be said to be positive, seeing how openly the Pope has shown himself in this affair of Genoa, and considering the complaints against him here. As to the Swiss, I know for certain that within the past eight days the Pope sent them thirty-six thousand ducats for six thousand men, which he wanted them to levy at once. The Swiss took the money, and then declared that they would not raise the men unless they had three months' pay, and that the Pope must send eighteen thousand ducats more; and on the 11th of the month they sent a courier from Geneva to Rome to demand these additional eighteen thousand ducats. Some think that the Pope wanted these men to overturn the government of Genoa; but it is not known whether the Duke of Savoy will grant them passage through his territory. Thus no one can judge how all this will end, and we must wait for the results as they manifest themselves from day to day. The king ordered the recall of his ambassadors from Rome, but has since then suspended this order.

I beg your Lordships to come to some decision in relation to the matter I wrote about from Lyons. To-day Robertet told me frankly that he bore and had borne for you *pondus diei et æstus, etc.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BLOIS, 18 July, 1510. *Secret.*

LETTER III.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

On the 18th I wrote to your Lordships, and sent the letter through Robertet to Bartolommeo Panciatichi at Lyons, with instructions to forward it by express to Florence. I presume it has safely reached your hands; the reply is eagerly awaited here. Yesterday I called upon Monseigneur de Paris, one of the ministers at present at the head of affairs; I spoke to him ceremoniously, and in a manner suitable to the individual and the circumstances. This prelate is of a calm temper and is reputed wise; and truly he could not have spoken more discreetly of your Lordships and of the events that are approaching. He remarked, "that the Pope made a great mistake in "exposing himself and all the states of Italy to great danger "for no other purpose than to injure others; and that if this "war was carried any further, it would be the greatest and most "obstinate war that had been seen for a long time, because the "king, just in proportion as he had bestowed benefits upon the "Pope and had earnestly sought his friendship, so he would "then show himself his bitter and unrelenting foe, and pursue "him in his states and even in his person, and that he should "feel himself justified in doing this before God and men." And then, turning to other matters, he said, "that before God "and men you could not be other than good Frenchmen, and "that the king had never had any other opinion, and that you "would see such military preparations in Italy for the defence "of his own possessions, as well as those of his friends, as would "relieve you of any apprehensions. And that even if the Pope "were to declare himself your enemy, that ought in no way to "hold you back; for his Majesty the king did not hesitate to "declare himself against the Pope to serve your republic in the "Arezzo business, and to oblige the son of the Sovereign Pontiff to come to him with the halter around his neck.* So "that now you ought to render him similar service, and declare "yourselves in good time, so that the benefit of it would be the "more agreeable, and might also result in advantage to your "Lordships." He alluded here to the Lucca business.

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* Alluding to the rebellion of Arezzo, which was excited by the Duke of Valentinois in 1502.

I replied to Monseigneur de Paris in a becoming manner, and after leaving him I called on the Chancellor, who is a man of hot and passionate temper. He assailed me at once with reproaches, both in relation to the ambassador who had left, as well as to Marc Antonio, saying that these were acts of an evil nature and calculated to fill every one with suspicion. And although he poured out a perfect torrent of words, because I did not remain quietly to listen to all he had to say, yet he calmed down a little before I left him. In his remarks he said more particularly, "that, if your Lordships were really good "friends of France, you would, whenever the Pope communicated to you anything adverse to France, give notice of it "here, and on the other hand show the Pope that your Lordships did not wish to hold any communication with him; but "that you had done nothing of the kind." I replied, "that at "the time of my departure from Florence there was not a man "in the whole city who imagined that any difference could "arise between his Majesty and the Pope; and that therefore "it was not necessary to resort to any such measures; and "that since my leaving Florence I did not know what the Pope "could have said or done to your Lordships; but that as regards the affair of Marc Antonio you had communicated to "the king all that had come to your knowledge, and that, if "anything else of moment had occurred, you would certainly "have communicated it also." Thereupon I left him, as I have said, considerably calmed down.

I have yet to call on Monseigneur d'Amiens, and Monseigneur de Bunicaglia, two other principal members of the council. I have not done so before, owing to the difficulty of finding them at home; during all these movements they are always together, and it is almost impossible to see them separately. I have, however, spoken to both of them together on my arrival, and since then in the presence of the king. I have called upon the Spanish ambassador, on whose behalf I have a thousand offers of service to make to your Lordships, which he says he has been charged with by his sovereign. I have also called upon the Emperor's ambassadors, there being two, one resident here and the other arrived here only a few days since per post, for the purpose, as I hear, of preventing the king's troops "from ceasing to make war upon the Venetians." Besides their formal civilities, they assured me with many protestations that it would be impossible for his Imperial Majesty and the king to be more united than what they are; and that their sovereign would never separate himself from the king of France. Time will show how true this is.

Afterwards I called upon the Pope's ambassador, who is really a most respectable gentleman, of great sagacity and experience in the affairs of state. I found him greatly dissatisfied with all these movements, and perfectly astonished that things have so suddenly come to the point of drawing the sword. And if he has told me the truth, he seems to be more doubtful than any one else as to the resources and arrangements of the Pope, assuring me that he knew nothing about them, and begging me to tell him whether I had received any information on the subject from your Lordships. He added, that when he reflected as to what sort of a war this was likely to be, and how desperate the attacks and defence, he actually trembled with fear. And, in conclusion, he lamented the errors committed in France as well as in Italy, of which the poor people and the smaller princes would be the first victims; and that, so far as he was concerned, he had left nothing undone to preserve peace, but that he had no longer any hope of it. "He seemed "altogether amazed at the conduct of the Pope, for he did not "see that he had at present any forces commensurate with "these movements, nor did he see where the Pope could obtain "them, or to what extent he could rely on them. And know-"ing the Pope to be prudent and serious, he could not believe "that he would have acted lightly in these matters, inasmuch "as he was well aware of his own needs and of those of the "Church." This is all I have been able to learn from this personage. In fact, no one here knows upon what foundations the Pope bases his actions, and thus, as I have said in a previous letter, "as nothing is really known here, they are afraid of "everything and of everybody."

News has been received here that twenty-two Venetian galleys have been signalled in our waters, but no one knows how they could have come there without the consent of Spain. We also learn to-day from Chaumont, that the Marquis of Mantua is free, and is going to Rome to see the Pope. Robertet has today communicated this fact to the Pope's ambassador here. We are informed that some Genoese exiles have landed at Spezzia, and have approached within a few miles of Genoa;

and this morning Robertet told me, with anything but a cheerful face, that Marc Antonio had gone in that direction. We hear consequently that it has been decided, unless they should change their mind, to break up the army that had been organized against the Venetians, and to leave five hundred lances with the Emperor's troops, so as not to fail in the engagements which they have contracted with him, and to send three hundred lances to Ferrara with a like number of infantry. All the other men-at-arms and infantry will be sent into the territory of Parma, to be employed in the defence of Genoa, or against Tuscany, after Genoa shall have been secured, etc.

"I have had some intimation that these French troops may "possibly go and establish themselves in the territory of the "Lucchese, for the purpose of punishing them, and preventing "their giving support to the Genoese exiles who have gone "there from here; and at the same time to encourage you to "declare in favor of the king of France. I have heard nothing "further of interest up to the present. As to what is being "said here of the Pope, your Lordships can readily imagine it: "to throw off his authority, to summon him before a council, "and to destroy his temporal and spiritual power,—these are "some of the least evils with which they threaten him."

I have nothing more to write, except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

BLOIS, 21 July, 1510.

LETTER IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

My first letter to your Lordships since my arrival here at court was of the 18th, and, as it contained matters of the greatest importance, I sent it through Robertet to Bartolommeo Panciatichi at Lyons, in accordance with the king's wishes, directing Bartolommeo, at the same time, to forward it to you by express. Although I feel quite sure that it has arrived safely, yet by way of extra precaution, and to make doubly sure, I enclose herewith a brief summary of its contents, which I could not send yesterday with the long letter I wrote to your Lordships, as the courier could not wait until I had written it. And therefore I resolved to send it to-day, and should not otherwise have written again, having reported to you fully yesterday all that had taken place here. So there is nothing left for me to say in this, except that after a solemn mass this morning his Majesty publicly, and in presence of the English ambassadors, ratified by a solemn oath the treaty that had been concluded between his Majesty and the king of England during the past month; it having been previously ratified by the king of England in the same way by a solemn oath. It is now said that these ambassadors will not go to Rome, as stated in my first letter, but that they will return to England. In fact, the Pope's ambassador told me this morning that there was no truth in the first report that these ambassadors were going to Rome, as they had come here exclusively for the ratification of the treaty.

Since writing the above, I have seen Robertet, who overwhelmed me with complaints against your Lordships, telling me that yesterday evening the king had complained very much because you had not advised him of anything, nor given him any information about Italian affairs, although you knew more about them than any one else; and that this want of civility on your part was due to nothing else than because you had not yet fully relieved your mind of all the ill feeling against him. Robertet added to this many harsh expressions of his own, which I shall not repeat, as I do not wish to weary your Lordships. I excused your Lordships, and corrected these opinions as best I could; but, as every one that has ever been here knows, these people close their ears to all one can say to them, and therefore, O Magnificent Signori, if you desire not to lose the friendship of the French, you must show them that you really mean to be their friend. And if you cannot do this in any other way, at least do not fail to send frequent letters and information, and do not hesitate from time to time to send a special courier to keep them advised of the state of affairs in Italy, so as to give to whoever may be here the opportunity of showing your good will, and thus preserve your Lordships' credit with them.

The blow which the Pope has attempted to inflict upon the French is of such a character, and is so keenly felt by the king, that I believe I am safe in expressing the opinion that he will revenge himself with great satisfaction and honor, or lose all his Italian possessions; and that he will promptly pass the mountains with double the vigor of former years; and everybody believes that he will do much more than what he threatens if England and the Emperor remain firm, of which there appears no doubt.

It is understood that the French have raised ten thousand men for the Genoese business, besides the men-at-arms which they have sent there. As these troops will be in your neighborhood, your Lordships will with your usual wisdom take a prompt resolution, which on that account will prove the more acceptable.

I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BLOIS, 22 July, 1510. *Secret.*

LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I have received through Francesco Pandolfini two of your Lordships' letters of the 12th instant. . . . . I shall write to-morrow to your Lordships more fully and more at my ease, and send these lines merely to acknowledge receipt of those letters, as a courier is just leaving for Milan; I send this under cover to Francesco Pandolfini. Since my being here I have written to your Lordships on the 18th, 21st, and 22d; and earnestly hope those letters have reached you safely. The French have received good news this morning from Genoa, and are all in the highest spirits about it. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BLOIS, 25 July, 1510. *Secret.*

LETTER VI.*

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

Your Lordships' letters of the 16th instant, sent to me through Francesco Pandolfini, being full of good news, "counsels, and resolutions, has had the effect of completely assuring "the French that your Lordships desire to preserve their friendship. To come to particulars. So soon as I received those "letters yesterday evening, I went to see Robertet, and informed "him of everything. He was greatly rejoiced, and said, 'It "seems your Signori are now doing all that the king wished "them to do; it will be well, therefore, that his Majesty should "know all this.' But as it was too late last night, I presented "myself early this morning before the king, and related to him "all the particulars, and read to him the contents of your "letters. When I came to tell him of the adherents upon "which he had counted, beginning with the Siennese, his Majesty said to me, 'Do not these hold some town of yours, I "know not exactly which?' And on my answering, 'Yes,' "he said, 'If God gives me life, they will not hold it much "longer, nor their own city either. Write this to your Signori, "and bid them be of good cheer.' When I came next to speak "of the Marquis of Mantua, the king said that he had been "liberated, but ought to be careful where he went. As to the "Emperor, he said that he felt quite sure of him. But of the "Swiss he said, 'By my faith, I am in doubt whether to let them "pass or not, for I do not know whether it would be better that "the Pope should be unarmed, or that he should have armor "on his back that will hurt him.' And then he spoke of the "character of the Swiss, saying that, with all his wealth and "power, he had found it most difficult to manage them, and "concluded that they would have treated him as they did the "Duke Lodovico; but that he had taken measures to hold them "to their engagements. After that his Majesty thanked your "Lordships for the reply you intended to make to the Pope as

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* Those portions of this letter comprised in quotation marks were written in cipher, and are not given in the "Italia" edition of Machiavelli's works, from which this translation is chiefly made, nor in any other edition published prior to 1877. I have found them, however, in the edition published at Florence in 1877, under the direction of L. Passerini and G. Milanesi, which unfortunately remains incomplete owing to the death of one of the editors.

"to the passage of troops for Genoa; and as to the trouble "which he caused you, he would order that all the troops which "he had in the direction of Florence should always be at your "call whenever you might have need of them. And as to the "measures taken with regard to Genoa, he said," Genoa was safe, for he had letters yesterday evening telling him that three thousand infantry had entered the city; also the son of Messer Gian Luigi del Fiesco with six hundred men, and a nephew of the Cardinale del Finale with as many more; and that the exiles, with the troops they had taken there, had withdrawn; and that his galleys, together with some Genoese vessels, had gone in pursuit of the Venetian galleys, which dared not wait for them. Thus his Majesty regards Genoa as safe, and the whole court is rejoicing and keeping holiday to-day. He told me that in consequence of this event the Venetians could neither advance nor attempt any movement of importance; for besides the large number of his own troops, there were those of the Emperor and of Spain, and that all this force was not only sufficient to hold the Venetians in check, but even to combat them. And then, speaking of the king of Spain, "his Majesty said to me that his fleet "had gone there, but that he had not given the king of Spain "any cause for enmity, nor did he believe that he had any such "feeling towards him, for the very credit and influence which "his friendship gave the king of Spain sustained him in Castile. "And as to your Lordships, and the advice and information "which you had sent him, he told me to go and see his Chan-"cellor and Robertet, and give them a little memorandum of "it. I have accordingly seen them since then, and they have "taken note to send two hundred lances to Serezana, and thus "recover that place from the hands of San Giorgio, and from "Rafaellino, who had been sent to Savona. Thus it seems to "me that the king and his counsellors attach much impor-"tance to your information and counsels; and therefore I hope "that, if your Lordships deem it well to keep the king and his "ministers in good humor, you will continue sedulously to send "them similar information."

This is all I have been able to learn from the king or his ministers in relation to the advices you have sent me. Nor is there any further news in relation to Genoese affairs beyond what his Majesty had told me.

All the above was written on the 25th. To-day is the 26th, and news from Genoa received to-day confirms what we had heard from there yesterday. A grand council of the people had been held, at which some three hundred citizens were present, and the question came up whether the funds of the Bank of San Giorgio should be employed to defend the city in behalf of the king of France; it was so decided with only eight dissenting votes. His Majesty spoke of it this morning with the English ambassadors, and said publicly that the Florentines had refused to allow the Pope's troops to pass through their territory on their way to Genoa; and that the Florentines were his great and good friends.

I have called to see the ambassador of the Marquis of Mantua, to know how he viewed the liberation of his master.* He told me that he could not regard this liberation as having any other ground than the hope of the Pontiff to avail himself of services of the Marquis in the present movements, or perhaps some promise which the Marquis had made to the Pope. And when I told the ambassador that, if it were the latter, the Marquis must either break his old engagements with the king of France, or the new ones with the Pope, he answered, that promises made in captivity need not be observed, and that his master would never take sides against his Majesty of France; and that even if, for the sake of gaining his liberty, he had been forced personally to oppose the king, yet his states would never do anything to displease his Majesty, but would always remain firm in their devotion to him.

I am fully aware, as I have already said in former letters, that your Lordships desire much to know the course which Spain and the Emperor are going to take, and I should be very glad to be able to give you some information on that point, but cannot well see the way to do it, for it is not likely that these sovereigns would write here to communicate their intentions; and thus their ambassadors remain in the dark, and all that could be said here about it would be mere conjecture; and your Lordships are in a situation to form such conjectures much better than I can here. As regards England, I will only say that on Sunday last, as I have already mentioned in a former letter, the peace between the king of England, as represented by his ambassadors, and the king of France, was solemnly sworn in presence of all the foreign ambassadors and the whole court. And when I told his Majesty that the Pope also counted upon England, he laughed, and said, "You have heard yourself the oath of peace," etc.

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* The Marquis of Mantua had been made prisoner of war by the Venetians on the 7th of August, 1509.

This movement of the Pope displeases everybody here; all seem to think that he seeks to ruin Christianity, and to accomplish the destruction of Italy. But as his attempt upon Genoa proved a failure, it is to be hoped that, if he does not persist in his obstinacy, and does not wish to cause so much ill, matters may yet be arranged, and the more easily if there are good intermediaries. For although the injury which the Pope intended to inflict upon the crown of France was very great, nevertheless as he failed in it, and, on the other hand, an attempt on the part of the king to revenge himself being fraught with much danger, inasmuch as there could not be a more honorable action for a prince than to attack another in defence of the Church, the result might well be that his Majesty, by openly attacking the Pope, would expose himself to the enmity of the whole world. Thus it is believed that he would readily yield to good counsels, and that even an attack upon Ferrara would not prevent it. It only remains, then, that the Pope should want that which ought to be. His pride having been brought down a little by the ill success of the attempt upon Genoa, he will have seen from the failure of his first steps that the difficulties of the enterprise are greater than he supposed. And if this shall have made him a little more timid, ways and means ought not to be wanting to make sure of him; particularly if, as I have said, there are good mediators. I have been requested, therefore, by a personage of worth and authority, to beg your Lordships not to hesitate to undertake this negotiation, and to use your influence to make the Pope understand all that you can discreetly say to him; for this person apprehends that, if it were attempted from here, it would not be well received. I wanted to write to your Lordships these last particulars, thinking that I should not transcend the bounds of my duty in communicating to you all I see and hear here at court. *Valete!*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Blois, 26 July, 1510. *Secr. apud R. Chr.*

LETTER VII.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

My last letter was of the 26th, in reply to two from your Lordships of the 12th instant; in that letter I reported all that had taken place here up to that day, and particularly that those letters had caused his Majesty to be entirely satisfied with your Lordships. Yesterday I received another letter from you, of the 16th, and although the news it contains is already old, nevertheless, by way of showing his Majesty that you did not fail even for one day in your duty to him, I presented myself this morning before him, and communicated to him the entire contents of your letter, with all of which he was well satisfied; telling me that he had been already informed by the Grand Master that your Lordships had been very zealous in keeping him fully advised of every occurrence. His Majesty also told me that he had news from Chaumont that his troops had captured Monselice in the most glorious manner possible; and that, after taking the town by assault, they had with the same ardor taken the castle, where they had killed some six hundred men or more, not permitting one to escape. His Majesty smiled at this and said, "Last year I was looked upon as a bad man, because in a battle which I fought so many men were killed; "now Monseigneur de Chaumont will be regarded the same." His Majesty told me that the commander at Monselice had been a man from Berzighella, but he did not know his name, and that during the fight the Monselice men had all cried, "Julio!" "Julio!" All this his Majesty related to me with infinite pleasure. He told me also that he had no news from Genoa, but that order had been at once restored there, and everything satisfactorily settled. As Bartolommeo Panciatichi had written me from Lyons that all letters were opened in Lombardy, not excepting your Lordships', I spoke to his Majesty about it, especially as your last letters were handed to me open, and begged him to be pleased to order the officials charged with that business to discontinue opening the letters to and from your Lordships. His Majesty said it should be done, and asked me to tell Robertet of it in his behalf; that a general order for the opening of letters had been given prior to my arrival, and that since my coming they had not thought of exempting your Lordships' letters from this general order. I have since then spoken to Robertet about it, who promised me to send the necessary instructions in relation to it by the very next courier.

The ambassador from Ferrara told me this morning that the Pope's troops, after taking the two castles mentioned in your Lordships' letters of the 16th, have laid siege to another castle, but as he did not remember the name I cannot give it to you. On the approach of the Pope's troops, the garrison of the castle made a sortie and captured twenty-three men-at-arms of the Pope's forces. The King was delighted when he heard this. I asked the Ferrarese ambassador how many men the Pope had employed in this enterprise, but he could not tell me, and complained that his master did not keep him well informed. He said that he had urgently requested the king to aid the Duke with infantry, and that his Majesty had given him the best hopes. We shall see what will come of it.

As already mentioned in my former letters, it is reported that the Marquis of Mantua is at Bologna; and his ambassador here begins to apprehend that his liberation may make his condition rather worse as regards his states. His proceedings are being watched, which will enable us to form a better judgment of his conduct.

Whilst writing this the ambassador of the king of Würtemberg has returned here, it being now the twenty-third hour. He is a German gentleman, accompanied by a suite of about a dozen cavaliers. He was met on his entrance into the city and received with all the honors. So soon as I learn why he left here, and why he returns, I will inform your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Blois, 29 July, 1510.

The English ambassadors left here two days ago to return to their country, laden with honors and presents.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret. apud R. Chr.

P. S. — To-day is the 30th, and we have news this morning that the troops which had gone by land to overturn the government of Genoa, finding themselves pursued, have in great part re-embarked on board the Venetian fleet. Each galley has taken six cavaliers and their captain; and about one hundred cavaliers have rallied together to try and cut their way out. They are not without hopes here that some mishap may befall the Venetian fleet.

We also hear that the Marquis of Mantua has sent for his son, to place him in the hands of the Pope; whereupon the king has sent word to the ambassador of the Marquis to try to induce the Marchioness to oppose it, and the ambassador is of the opinion that she will never consent to it, and that secretly the Marquis would be pleased that she should refuse to give up the son.

The object of the Würtemberg ambassador's coming is said to be the following. The king of France, seeing the conduct of the Swiss, and the hopes which the Pope builds upon them, has resolved, for the purpose of making them pause and reflect so that they may not so readily serve the Pope, to give them some trouble, or at least to menace them through the king of Würtemberg, who is their natural enemy. The Duke's ambassador has passed nearly the whole of to-day at the council in deliberating as to the steps to be taken in this matter.

His Majesty has also sent the captain of his Swiss body-guard to Switzerland, to try on the one hand to win back, if not all the Cantons, at least a part of them, and so we shall soon see whether by menaces or by persuasion these Swiss can be detached from the Pope.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI *ut supra.*

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LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

Your Lordships are aware, from what I wrote you a few days since, that the Pope had not succeeded in his attempt to overturn the government of Genoa; and that the king of France, on the one hand, had been more frightened than hurt, and that, on the other hand, the Pope, by showing himself the open enemy of the king of France, so far from causing him any serious trouble, had rather strengthened his Majesty's position, in more securely consolidating his authority in Genoa. His Holiness having thus failed in gaining the advantages which he had promised himself by this movement, it seemed to the good and sensible men of this court that possibly an agreement between the king and the Pope might be hoped for, if a loyal mediator could be found, who would intervene for the good of Christendom in general and Italy in particular. For it would be easy to show to the king in what position he would place himself if he attempted to make war upon the Pope, and what damage he might suffer himself by a proceeding, the cost of which would be certain, but the final result most doubtful. And in the same way the Pope could with like facility be persuaded of the ills which this war might bring not only to himself personally, but also to the temporal and spiritual authority of the Church, as well as to all Christendom.

Matters being in this position, and having several times conversed with the Pope's ambassador here, who is grieved to the heart by these movements, Robertet one evening sent for Giovanni Girolami, who is the business agent here of his Eminence the Cardinal Volterra, as Alessandro Nasi can tell you; and after having first talked with him about some of his private affairs, Robertet suddenly turned the conversation upon these troubles that are brewing, and complained to him bitterly about these movements, and demonstrated to him that they could not but cause regret and injury both to the victor and the vanquished. And going from one argument to another he concluded by saying that, if the Pope were disposed to make peace, he would be met half-way by the king; and that the Pope ought to do so, unless indeed the Almighty had inspired him with obstinacy for the ruin of the world. But that anyhow he did not see clearly how a peace could be brought about unless some third party intervened, inasmuch as the king would never be the first to yield, and as the Pope would probably take the same ground. And having therefore thought much as to how such an agreement might possibly be brought about, he saw but one way, and that was that your Lordships and the Cardinal Volterra should undertake the mediation, as any others would only spoil the matter by trying to gain advantages for themselves from this enmity. And then he intimated to Giovanni that it would be well that he should go himself for this purpose to Florence. Giovanni, on the one hand, expressed his willingness to go, but on the other hand declared that the negotiation should be managed in such a way that your Lordships should clearly see what sort of business they entered upon, and that you ought to be well assured of the intentions of the king, so as to be sure that neither you nor any one else should be duped; and that he believed, if this were done, you would readily undertake the mediation, knowing how greatly your Lordships desired peace and concord between the two sovereigns, and how much you dreaded discord, from which nothing but enmity and disaster would result. Nothing was concluded that evening, but another meeting was agreed upon.

When Giovanni related all this to me, I thought it best not to discourage this negotiation, but rather to urge it forward as much as possible, and communicated it to the Pope's ambassador, not as to a party interested, but as to a mediator, who would be useful in such a negotiation. He thought the conversation with Robertet very opportune and to the purpose for those who really aimed at the good of all, and resolved to go and see the king. Having done so, he pointed out to his Majesty the dangers to which he exposed himself, and the frauds that had been practised underhandedly to bring the Pope to the point where he was. He showed his Majesty first the suspicions which the king of Spain had conceived in regard to their alliance; for scarcely two months since the reported treaty between them, the king of Spain, having become suddenly apprehensive that the treaty would operate to his disadvantage, sent a fleet to Sicily, under pretence of another enterprise. Afterwards, when the disputes with Ferrara broke out, the Spanish representative here persuaded the king of France not to abandon Ferrara, whilst the Spanish envoy at Rome demonstrated to the Pope that his Majesty of France had done wrong to defend the Duke of Ferrara; and that it was in this way that they had brought matters to the point where they wanted them. His Majesty ought therefore to think well as to the course he was about to engage in; for if the Pope had tried to do him an injury, he had not succeeded in the attempt, and therefore it would be well to forget it rather than to give him cause to think of attempting another, which might succeed. To all this he added a number of other reasons, which I will not relate lest I should become tedious. The king listened to all this patiently, and then replied: "I admit the truth of all you say, but what "would you have me do? I shall never be the first to declare myself. The Pope has struck a blow at me, but I will "bear all except the loss of honor and my state. But I prom-

"ise you faithfully that if the Pope makes any demonstration "of affection towards me, be it only the thickness of my finger-"nail, I will go the length of my arm to meet him; but other-"wise I shall not move an inch."

The ambassador thought that he had sufficiently discovered the king's disposition in the matter, and took his leave. After that he passed more than an hour with Robertet discussing the best way of proceeding in this business; and in view of what Giovanni Girolami had said, they concluded it would be best to have him go to Florence, and try to persuade your Lordships to undertake the task of acting as mediators between the Pope and his Majesty of France; but that it would be necessary for you to act as though it were spontaneous with you, and that you should send at once one or two ambassadors to Rome for this particular purpose. When informed of their conclusion, I observed to them that, to induce your Lordships the more readily to undertake this office of mediators, it would be necessary that I should be able to write to you that this attempt would be most agreeable to his Majesty and that your undertaking it would be very gratifying to him; and that, if his Majesty was not willing to say this to me himself, it should at least be said to me by his counsellors. And so it was decided that Robertet should communicate the whole project to the king; namely, the sending of Giovanni to Florence, and your proposed intervention, as well as the manner of making it known to your Lordships. Robertet was entirely satisfied with this, and this morning, whilst his Majesty had gone to breakfast, Monseigneur de la Tremouille, who for two weeks has assisted at every council together with Robertet and the Chancellor, called me, and, after some sharp words against the Pope, said to me that, notwithstanding all this, as Giovanni Girolami was going to Florence, he wished to tell me on the part of the king that his Majesty was satisfied and would have great pleasure in your Lordships' intercession between the Pope and himself, and that you should send ambassadors to Rome for this purpose, and manage the whole affair as you thought best. The business then stands thus. Giovanni, who will bring you this letter, goes per post to Florence, and will tell you orally all I have written, and give you any further particulars that you may wish to know in relation to this affair. And so that your Lordships may know how this affair is to be managed to the satisfaction of France, Robertet said (and doubtless with the full knowledge of the king) that if the Pope would submit his claims upon Ferrara to arbitration, his Majesty would be satisfied, and would not care to whose hands the Pope were to confide this arbitration. This, however, relates rather to the conclusion of the affair, than to the way of initiating it; it would suffice that the Pope should put a stop to the preparations he is making against the king of France, such as the stirring up of the Swiss and the other powers; and that his Holiness should orally express to your ambassadors his wish to be a father to the king, provided that his Majesty would act the part of a good son to him. And that the Pope should write a brief to the king to that effect, who upon receiving it would be prepared to send an envoy to Rome; and that, if the negotiations were begun in this way, he doubted not but what good would result from it.

Your Lordships will now with your habitual prudence take into consideration what I have written, and what Giovanni will communicate to you, and will then decide upon such measures as you may deem most proper; but in all this business the greatest promptness is most necessary.

I have not discouraged these overtures, because I think that the enmity between these two sovereigns would be one of the greatest misfortunes that could befall our city, for the reasons which you have seen and heard from the first origin of the difficulty; and therefore I have regarded all means as good that may be employed to bring about a peace. And I cannot but think that in becoming mediators your Lordships will gain great advantages, whether the negotiation succeeds or not. If it succeeds, then it will bring about the peace we so much hope for and desire, and we shall escape the dangers which the war would bring to our very doors. And the more important the part which you take in the matter, the greater will be the satisfaction and the advantages which you will derive from it. For you will have laid both the king and the Pope under obligations, having labored for their interests no less than for your own. And if it does not succeed, his Majesty of France will remain equally obliged to you for having done that which he approved of, and for having given him, in the face of the whole world, more just grounds than ever for his contentions with the Pope. Nor will the Pontiff be able to complain of you if, after your efforts to persuade him to a peace, which he has rejected, you should take part against him in the war. All these considerations induced me to become so readily mixed in these negotiations, and if your Lordships approve of my course, I should prize it highly; but if not, then I must entreat you to excuse me, for in my position here I could not view the matter differently.

His Majesty is pushing his arrangements and preparations most vigorously. He has ordered a meeting of a general council of all the prelates of his realm for the middle of September, at Orleans. He has taken the Duke of Würtemberg into his pay, so as to have German troops and check the movements of the Swiss, and at the same time he has sent the captain of his Swiss guard amongst them to try and recover, if not all, at least a part of the Cantons. He has ordered all the captains of his infantry to make out their muster-rolls, so as to be ready to start at any moment, and has ordered out the ban and rear-ban for the protection of his realm, also a supply of horses for a remount if necessary; and has also prescribed new ways of raising money for the expenses of the war, without touching his private treasury.

The arrival of Monseigneur de Gurck is looked for here; he is the most important man of the Emperor. The king intends to propose to Monseigneur de Gurck that the Emperor shall hold himself in readiness to march in the spring with such troops as he may have or may be able to raise. His Majesty is resolved to accompany him in person to Rome with twenty-five hundred lances and thirty thousand infantry; and he has sworn on his soul to achieve two things, at the risk of losing his kingdom, namely, to have the Emperor crowned in Rome, and to make a Pope to his own liking.

The king of Spain has written a letter most favorable to the projects of the king of France, and censuring the Pope's attempt against Genoa; offering to his Majesty of France twelve of his armed galleys, to be employed for or against whomever his Majesty pleases. These letters are in every way favorable to France, and do not spare the Pope in the least. His Majesty has also ordered a fleet to be fitted out by spring proportionate to his land forces.

Your Lordships can imagine now how great in the sight of God and men will be the merits of him who shall put a stop to all these movements, and who by his wisdom will prove himself the physician to cure all these ills.

The great importance of these matters has almost made me forget to mention the arrival at this court, two days ago, of an ambassador from Lucca; but I will not weary you now with any particulars respecting him, as Giovanni is fully informed, and will tell you all about him.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BLOIS, 3 August, 1510.

I have given Giovanni Girolami private instructions, in which I mention the Pope's ambassador, and say that this affair has been conducted thus far entirely in accordance with his counsels, and that he has taken upon himself to manage his Holiness so as to bring him round to this proposition; bearing in mind that the war which he is making against the king of France is founded upon two things: the one, suspicion; and the other, the wrongs he imagines he has received at the hands of the king in the matter of Ferrara. As to the first, namely, the suspicions, he must pretend to share them, but at the same time show the Pope the necessity of adopting some prudent measures to secure himself against the apprehended danger, against which neither his arms nor ours would suffice, and upon those of others we cannot rely. He must also tell the Pope what the king of Spain has written in favor of France, without referring to the Pope; and the same with regard to the messages sent here by the Duke of Savoy. But it might very possibly be arranged that the other princes would guarantee the promises of the king of France, and this would be the safest plan to adopt, without having to upset the whole world. *Valete!*

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LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Since the departure of Giovanni Girolami from here with full information as to the state of affairs here, and with instructions (which your Lordships will have found enclosed in my letter) to see whether some way could not be found for an arrangement between the king and the Pope, I have received your Lordships' letters of the 26th ultimo. As his Majesty has gone on a pleasure excursion some three leagues from here, I went to see Robertet and communicated to him the contents of your letters; and amongst other things I mentioned the news that the troops which had left Genoa had taken refuge at Camajore, a place belonging to Lucca. To this Robertet replied that he had letters from Genoa with quite contrary information, namely, that Marc Antonio's men had taken refuge on Pisan territory, where they had been stripped by the peasants; but that your Lordships had compelled these country people to make restitution of everything they had taken from these troops, which had caused great dissatisfaction to his Majesty, who concluded from this, and other similar acts of yours, that you did not go with him entirely. I told him that my letters said exactly the contrary, and that it was not reasonable that these cavaliers, who could with perfect safety take refuge on Lucchese territory, should have sought it within your Lordships' dominions. It would be well, therefore, that your Lordships should inform me fully as to how this affair really occurred.

Yesterday I thought it proper to go to see the king, and whilst with his Majesty I told him what your Lordships had written; namely, that, having received his Majesty's letter on the very day that you had written to me, you could not reply to it at once; but as you had already by your acts manifested your good intentions, it might reasonably be assumed that you would do the same in your letters. His Majesty said that he believed it, but then at once began to speak on the same subject that Robertet had spoken about; namely, the plundering of certain troops by the peasants, and the reported restitution by your Lordships; to which I made the same reply that I had made to Robertet. And his Majesty then said, "The Grand Master has "by my orders notified the Signori to keep their troops ready, "so that I may make use of them whenever I require them; "and I now tell you to say the same thing to them, for in the "daily current of events I think no less of their interests than "of my own." And thereupon I took my leave, for as his Majesty had been on horseback till the twentieth hour, he could not prolong my audience.

Magnificent Signori, when I left yesterday morning to go and see the king, it was in company with Robertet; and during the whole distance of three leagues from here to where the king was, we talked over all the affairs of Italy, and in a general way also the events of the day. I say in a general way, for no one has communicated to me any details of their plan for attacking the Pope. For these French people do not trust us altogether, and will, in fact, never trust your Lordships until you declare yourselves openly in their favor and join them with arms in hand. The character of the French is naturally suspicious, and they suspect your Lordships the more, because they know you to be prudent, and therefore not apt to expose your interests to great risks. It is this that gave rise to the request which they made, and which I communicated to your Lordships in my letter of the 18th, and which they now renew. And you may believe as you do the Evangely, that, if war breaks out between the Pope and his Majesty of France, you will not be able to avoid declaring yourselves in favor of one of the parties, wholly irrespective of the regards you may have for the other; the present demand is proof of this. And as, in case of being obliged to do what I have just said, your city will be exposed to some risk, it is the opinion of your friends here that it would be wise for you not to run that risk without receiving some advantages by way of compensation. I have mentioned to your Lordships that the king told me that he bore your interests in mind; and Robertet has on several occasions said to me, "You never say anything to me about Lucca; it is time "now to think of something." And even to-day, whilst conversing with him, he came back to the same subject, and asked me whether the duchy of Urbino would suit us. I turned the conversation, as I always do on similar occasions, and did not permit him to know my mind; for I make it a point to avoid entering upon a discussion of any subject respecting which I do not know your Lordships' views. I notice, however, that my reserve increases their suspicions, and makes them the more pressing to have you declare yourselves for them. Nor do I believe that the strictest observation of the terms of the treaty will suffice them; they want more than that; for whilst the treaty stipulations refer only to the defensive, they want to force you to the offensive, so as to commit you the more effectually to them. Thus they believe that, if the war does take place, you will be obliged to declare yourselves in their favor, or become their enemy. But do not persuade yourselves that this would make them hesitate, or that they cannot do without you; for their pride and confidence in their power will never allow them to come down to that point, and if such considerations were to restrain them for one moment, they would quickly disregard them. And therefore those persons here who are really attached to you think that it will be necessary for your Lordships, without waiting for time to press or necessity to oblige you, to attend to present events; to reflect well, and then take the direct course for the object you aim at; and that in any event you form definite resolutions. And when you think the time come for you to be obliged to declare yourselves out and out in favor of the king of France, then you ought at a suitable moment to think of your own interests; for when the question presents itself of the possible loss of your allies and your state, it is proper also that you should think of the advantages and profits that may be gained. For if you think it well to risk your fortunes with those of France, then it comes to this, that you can dispose of a good part of Tuscany as you may think proper, and contribute to the enterprise of another with an annual subsidy during a suitable length of time; and as opportunity is anyhow but short-lived, it behooves you to come to a prompt decision. And as I am not a personage of sufficient consequence to begin negotiations of such importance, your Lordships ought to charge the ambassador with it who is now on the way here, and as quickly as possible instruct him as to what arguments to advance in this negotiation; so that he may not be in the dark as to your Lordships' intentions when he arrives here, and so that he may be able promptly to say, "Yes," or "No"; for they do not mean to lose any time here.

To have a clearer understanding of the state of things here, you must know that the French have their thoughts fixed upon two things; namely, the first, to make peace with the Pope, provided he will make the first advances; of this Robertet has again repeated to me his assurances. And the second is, if peace is not made, then to win over to their side the Emperor of Germany; for they do not see themselves how they could succeed in the war alone and without the Emperor for an ally. I should believe in peace, were it not that those who are said to desire it most themselves spoil the chance of it; for to bring the Pope to the point where they want him, they ought to have delayed sending assistance to Ferrara, and should not have talked about changing the government of Bologna, so as not to arouse the suspicions of the Pope and exasperate him the more. All this they promised at the time when Giovanni Girolami was sent, but they do not stand by their promises, and thus they fail in projects of this kind.

"As to the Emperor, they make him larger or smaller offers, "according as they think they have greater or less need of him; "and the king has repeatedly said to a person who is not given "to tell lies: 'The Emperor has several times urged me to divide Italy with him, but I have always refused my consent; "now, however, the Pope obliges me to do it.' Your Lordships "are thus exposed to two dangers in this war between the Pope "and the king; the one that your ally may be defeated, and the "other that the king of France makes terms with the Pope to "your detriment. It would be well, therefore, that your ambassador should arrive here before Monseigneur de Gurck. "Those of the Italians here who have anything to lose think "that to avoid these dangers it is above all things necessary to "see whether the Pope can be induced to make peace with the "king of France, and if that cannot be done, then to convince "the king that to hold the Pope in check it needs neither so "many emperors nor so much noise; for those who in the past "have made war upon the Pope have either overreached him, "as was done by Philippe le Bel, or they caused him to be shut "up in the Castel San Angelo by his own barons; and these "are by no means so entirely exhausted but what means can be "found to stir them up again. Thus in my ride yesterday with "Robertet I talked of nothing else; I pointed out to him all the "examples of the past, and told him, moreover, that in making "war openly against the Pope they could not succeed without "exposing themselves to great dangers; for if they attempted "it by themselves, he could not but see that all the consequences "would fall upon France alone; and on the other hand, if she "had an ally, she would have to divide Italy with that ally, "with whom she would afterwards have to have a conflict, that "would prove much more dangerous than the one she had had "to sustain against the Pope."

Robertet agreed with me upon all points, and we need not despair of impressing their minds here with these examples, if there were only some few Italians of consideration here, who would take pains to do so.

I have written all this at length to your Lordships, with no other intention than to cause you to think well upon all that is going on here, in case there should be anything in it that can be turned to advantage for our city. And I entreat your Lordships to instruct your ambassador promptly and fully, so that by the force of your authority and his own he may open negotiations upon such points as your Lordships may deem advantageous to your city and conducive to your liberty. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BLOIS, August 9, 1510. *Secret.*

LETTER X.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Yesterday I received your Lordships' reply to my letter of the 18th, and this morning I came here to Saiburg, where the king is, for the purpose of communicating to him the contents of your letter; this I have done, and will report to your Lordships in detail and more at my ease in my next letter; the present one I write on my knee, and in haste for the mail which is just about to leave. I send this by way of Ferrara. After my audience with the king, your Lordships' letters of the 13th instant arrived. I regret exceedingly the unfortunate fate of my letters in Lombardy. Ten days ago, or more, I spoke to the king and to Robertet about providing for the prompt transmission of my letters, which both promised me. I have now complained to Robertet, who was surprised, and promised to write again most earnestly about it. To enable your Lordships to know which of my letters may have miscarried, I will state that I wrote on the 18th, 21st, 22d, 26th, and 29th ultimo, and on the 3d instant per Giovanni Girolami, and last on the 9th instant. Rest assured that I have not failed to do my duty in this respect. "After Robertet had spoken with the king, he "told me on the part of his Majesty that it would be very agree- "able to him that your Lordships should secretly give some aid "to the Duke of Ferrara; such, for instance, as to lend him "money on good security; and if you did not like to do it pub- "licly in your own name, then to have it done through some of "your private citizens. He has since then written to me very "fully about this, and I have replied that I would write to your "Lordships on the subject, alleging the difficulties that might "present themselves in this matter, as I will explain to you in "my next more fully." * I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

FROM THE ROYAL CHATEAU OF SAIBURG,
12 August, 1510.

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LETTER XI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

In my lines to your Lordships of yesterday, which I sent by the ambassador of the Marquis of Mantua, I stated briefly that I had been a considerable time with the king and Robertet after receipt of yours of the 28th in reply to mine of the 18th. "I communicated to them the contents of your letter, which "seemed very satisfactory to them; and his Majesty said to "me, 'You will see my chancellor, Robertet, and my other "ministers, who will acquaint you with my wishes.'"

I had hardly left the king when your Lordships' letter of the 13th came, informing me of the neglect and delay to which your Lordships' letters as well as mine have been subjected in Lombardy. I went at once back to Robertet, and communicated to him the information contained in your letter, and complained to him, etc., etc. I told him also of the dangers to which our merchants had been exposed in consequence of the Pope's having merely heard of the demands which the king had made on my arrival. He manifested surprise at the first, and said he would again give instructions about forwarding the letters; but as to the second, he said that he did not know where the Pope could have heard of it; he would, however, remind the king to be more cautious hereafter.

"His Majesty returned here to-day; and after dinner Mon- "seigneur de l'Oratellis and the other five members of the "council had me called, and the Chancellor, after a long ex- "ordium upon the services rendered by France to Florence,

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* This passage within quotation marks was written in cipher, and has not appeared in any edition prior to that of Passerini and Milanesi.

"beginning from the time of Charlemagne and coming down "to the present King Louis, said that his Majesty had understood that the Pope, moved by a diabolical spirit that had "taken possession of his mind, wanted to renew his attempt "against Genoa, in which case it might well be that Monseigneur de Chaumont would have need of your troops to defend "his Majesty's possessions. He therefore desired that your "Lordships should keep your troops on foot, so that they might "be ready for active service at any moment that Monseigneur "de Chaumont should call for them. And that his Majesty "also wished you to keep a few thousand regular infantry on "the frontier ready for service; and that in this wise you would "lay the king and the house of France under eternal obligations "to you. I replied to all this in accordance with what your "Lordships had written me in your letter of the 28th in answer "to mine of the 18th, that they ought to bear in mind that your "dominion was entirely surrounded by the states of the Pope, "who upon the least suspicion had threatened to have our "merchants plundered, and would certainly do so upon the "slightest demonstration on the part of your Lordships, and "that moreover he would leave every other war for the purpose of combating you. And that therefore, inasmuch as his "Majesty could do very well without our being mixed up in the "matter, he ought to have some little consideration for your "Lordships. And as regards troops, we had but very few on "the frontier, and that these would have to be paid whenever "ordered to be ready to march, and any expenditure in addition "to what we were already burdened with would be actually "insupportable by our city. They answered nearly all at the "same moment to my remarks, saying that the troops would "be wanted only for a few days to repel an attack, and that "your Lordships ought to remember that the king was as solicitous about your honor and interests as about his own. That "his Majesty's preparations were on such a scale that he would "make *cœlum novum et terram novam* in Italy, to the detriment of his enemies and the exaltation of his friends; and "that I ought for these reasons to write to your Lordships and "hand the letter to Robertet to be forwarded, which he promised to do."

I wrote to your Lordships on the 9th, giving full account of the state of things here; if time permits, I will enclose a copy of it with this letter, for I see that things are going in the way I said they would; "that is to say, these people here want to "involve you irretrievably in this war, and for that reason you "should ponder well what I have written before, and bethink "yourselves as to what advantages you may be able to gain; "for according to their proposition we should be much exposed "to loss."

The Emperor has sent a herald to the army of the Church to warn the Duke of Urbino and the other commanders not to molest Ferrara, "at which the generals laughed." According to what we hear from there the Pope's affairs are prospering, for he has taken Cotignola and Luco. Monseigneur de Gurck has not yet arrived, but is expected daily.

I have written to your Lordships on the 18th, 21st, 22d, 26th, and 30th ultimo, and the 3d, 9th, and 12th instant. Your Lordships will see now that my letters have been stopped somewhere on the road. The French are taking the course which I indicated in my letter of the 3d; it is evident that they are not disposed to reject the treaty of peace, whilst on the other hand they are making great preparations for war, as I have mentioned already in former letters. *Valete!*

BLOIS, 13 August, 1510.

Nothing more is said about the horses restored to Marc Antonio, and I keep quiet about it.

I send copy of my letter of the 9th hereto appended, or rather herewith enclosed.

Servus
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

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LETTER XII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My last to your Lordships was of the 13th, and, assuming that it has arrived safely, I do not now repeat its contents. Yours of the 7th with the copy from Rome came yesterday; and those of the 4th, with which Reino had been charged, have, according to what Bartolommeo Panciatichi writes, remained in Lombardy; not for want of great efforts on my part many days ago with his Majesty, as well as his counsellors. His Majesty told me that he had given orders to allow these letters to pass, and the ministers say they have written about it. They all profess to be astonished at this detention of my letters, and I can do nothing more than to remind them of their promises, which of course I shall do.

Immediately after receipt of the above-mentioned letter of your Lordships of the 7th, I presented myself before his Majesty the king, and communicated to him the contents of that letter; which, being very full and acceptable, were listened to by his Majesty with the greatest pleasure; and particularly, it seemed to me, on account of the conclusions presented by our ambassador at Rome; namely, "that if the Pope found "terms of agreement that were satisfactory and to the purpose "of which I wrote in my letter of the 3d, then to advise his "Majesty to profit, with his habitual wisdom, by this discouragement of the Pope; and to avail himself of it as promptly "as possible for making a favorable peace, provided his Holiness consented, rather than to think of punishing him by a "war, the end of which no one could foresee; and to remember "that such movements were not becoming to Christians, nor to "one who had seen all his desires gratified, as was the case with "his Majesty. The king replied to this with an earnestness "which it would be difficult to describe; averring with oaths "that, inasmuch as it was not he who had originated the war "against the Pope, so it would not be his fault if peace were "not made. After that he went on with many words to complain of the Pope's conduct, and how, since the defeat of the "Venetians, he had never been able to make him listen to "reason; and although he was himself entirely disposed to "make peace, yet he had not neglected to provide for war. "That he had again sent three hundred lances into Italy that "had just come from Burgundy, and three thousand infantry; "for he did not intend merely to defend himself and his friends, "but he wanted also to attack his enemies. He thanked your "Lordships and praised you very much for the information "given him, and assured me that he would be greatly pleased "to receive similar advices from you daily. Thereupon I took "my leave of his Majesty; and as the council was assembled "in session, I thought it well to go there, and in the presence "of all I made them the same communications that I had made "to the king. It would be impossible for me to tell your Lord- "ships with what pleasure I was listened to by the whole coun- "cil, and all declared that what your Lordships had done was "a real service and the act of a good friend."

I have no other news to communicate to your Lordships, excepting what the envoy from Ferrara had told me, that the Grand Master had received full authority to defend Ferrara *cum totis viribus;* and some days afterwards I saw him in very good humor.

An agent of the Marquis of Mantua has come here secretly; and since his arrival here they are all much more favorably disposed towards the Marquis; and it is supposed that he also wanted to avail himself of the occasion like the king of Spain.

His Majesty stated this morning that Gio Paolo Baglioni had been killed by a bolt from a crossbow; your Lordships ought to know whether or not this be true.

"Since the receipt of this news the same friend of mine "whom I mentioned in my letter of the 3d is very hopeful "that the treaty will be concluded, provided your Lordships "will actively intervene, particularly as he has letters from "Rome that encourage similar hopes. This friend and Rober- "tet are most anxious to know what decision your Lordships "have come to with regard to my letter of the 3d, and since "the arrival of Giovanni Girolami. Yesterday my friend had "a long conversation with the king, and, after telling his Ma- "jesty what he had heard from Rome, he suggested to him the "same course of action that I had done, and received the same "answer. He had, moreover, pointed out to his Majesty that "the same persons who had caused him and the Pope to draw "the sword were now doing their utmost to induce them to "sheathe it again; on the one hand demonstrating to the king "here the impossibility of the Pope's ever acquiescing in any "peace, and on the other hand proving to the Pope that he "could never trust the king. So long as this question is pend- "ing, one of the parties imagines that his state is perfectly "secure, whilst the other thinks that he will soon gain a por- "tion of it. My friend added that he knew that Monseigneur "de Gurck was coming here with his account already made "out; but that if he found more favorable terms here he would "accept them, and if not, then he would return to those who "had made him fairer promises. His Majesty sees the force "of all these arguments, and assents; but in the end it came "to this, that he said, 'What is it that you would have me do? "I am not going to allow the Pope to beat me.' From this "reply and from other indications it is evident that the king "has decided most reluctantly upon this war; but if pushed to "it by the force of circumstances, then he is resolved to make "it the most magnificent war that has yet been seen in Italy. "His intention is to temporize this winter, and to conclude "firm alliances with England and the Emperor; and having "gained these two powers he cares nothing for Spain, and says "to every one that will listen to him that he looks upon the "king of Spain as no more than king of Castile. And by way "of more surely winning the support of the two above-named "sovereigns, and to leave nothing undone, he has ordered in "the midst of all this the convocation of a council of the Gallican Church. A large number of these prelates have already "arrived, and they are busy in preparing for the meeting which "has been appointed to take place at Orleans; and at this "council the obedience to the Pope will be formally abolished, "and if England and the Emperor concur, they will elect a "new Pope; and in the spring the king will descend into Italy "with such an overwhelming force that it will not be war, but "simply a promenade to Rome. Such are the plans of the "king if peace is not made, and provided the two sovereigns "leave the direction of affairs in his hands to be managed as "the Almighty may deem for the best. In truth, if your Lordships were situated elsewhere, all this would be very desirable, "so that our priests might also taste a little of the bitterness "of this world." *

I entreat your Lordships with the utmost earnestness, if you do not wish me to sell my horses and return on foot to Florence, to direct Bartolommeo Panciatichi to advance me fifty scudi; for I am here with three horses. On my return I will give full account of my expenditures, and I rely upon your Lordships' acting in this matter with your wonted goodness. *Valete!*

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret. Flor.

BLOIS, 18 August, 1510.

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* All within quotation marks in this and the subsequent letters was originally written in cipher.

LETTER XIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last of the 18th instant informed your Lordships fully of all that was passing here, and at the same time I replied to the letters which your Lordships had written me up to that date. Since then I have received your two despatches of the 10th and 11th; and as the king is suffering from a cough which is prevalent throughout this whole country, I have communicated to Robertet such portion of the information contained in your letters as in my judgment I thought proper he should know, and gave him moreover a note of it, so that he might show it to his Majesty, etc.

Although your Lordships have been informed from Rome that the Pope almost despairs of being able to count upon the Swiss, yet it is evident that the French here are very apprehensive and suspicious of them, and the more so, as I am informed, because the Swiss boast of being able at any time to make a road over the Alps, which no one can prevent, nor hinder them from coming down in the neighborhood of Savona. Being accustomed to carry their provisions with them, they could pass above Genoa and get into the Lucchese territory by the Riviera di Levante, without being exposed to attack; and they could not be prevented getting from there into the Bolognese territory, where they would unite with the Papal forces. I do not know the country myself, and may possibly be mistaken, and some persons think it a very long and roundabout way; but however that may be, the truth is that the French stand in great fear of these Swiss; and I venture to say that, if they were to declare themselves in favor of the French, these would care but little for all the other powers.

They had also become somewhat distrustful of the Emperor, because nothing more had been heard of Monseigneur de Gurck; yesterday, however, news was received that he had started on the 13th instant. So they have recovered their confidence a little, and are of good cheer upon that point; for if the Emperor were to abandon the French, their want of German infantry would then oblige them to look to their own homes rather than to other people's.

I wrote to your Lordships that the ambassador from Ferrara was well pleased with the preparations which the king had ordered for the benefit of the Duke; but I have since then found him in a very different humor, complaining that the French order one thing to-day and recall it to-morrow. It seems to me that he fears that in the end his Duke may fare badly. He complains also that the French have their ideas turned too much towards the next spring, thinking that the arrival of the king with a powerful army will remedy everything; but they do not take into account that in the mean time some of their allies may meet with disaster.

I learn from a good source that the Marquis of Mantua has promised to serve the Pope with his person and his state, so soon as his Holiness shall have made himself master of Ferrara, but that in the mean time he will remain neutral.

Nothing else occurs to me to say, unless it be to recommend myself again to your Lordships, and to beg you to instruct Bartolommeo Panciatichi to pay me the fifty scudi of which I am in great need, as stated in my letter of the 18th, to enable me not only to return home, but to have myself cured; for I am still suffering from the effects of the cough, which has left my stomach in such wretched condition that I have no appetite for anything. I must add, that there is an extraordinarily great mortality at Paris: more than a thousand persons die per day. May the Almighty not abandon us! *Valete!*

BLOIS, 24 August, 1510.

For some days past the question has been discussed between the king and his councillors of sending a representative of his Majesty to reside near your Lordships; and to hasten his coming to Florence it has been proposed to charge Monseigneur de Chaumont with sending him. I do not know whether anything has been done in the matter, for it is five days since I have seen or spoken to any one, having been confined to my chamber by this cough. *Iterum valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secr. Flor. apud. Chr. M.

LETTER XIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

The last letters I have from your Lordships were of the 11th instant. Since then you will have received mine of the 3d, 9th, 12th, 13th, 18th, and 24th instant, from which if they have reached you safely, you will have seen how matters are progressing here.

Yesterday we had news of the capture of Modena, in consequence of which a council was held yesterday and to-day in relation to that matter; but I do not know as yet what has been decided upon. True, I have seen the ambassador from Ferrara, who was going to the council; he seemed discontented, and repeated to me what I wrote you in my last he had said to me, namely; "that the French had promised him "a number of times powerful help, and had actually given "the orders for it, but that these were afterwards revoked, as "though they thought the Duke could help himself. On the "other hand, they boast of their great preparations, without "thinking of what may happen in the mean time, or that those "who suffer the evils have also to bear the cost. Robertet, "as stated in my last letter, has been ill with this cough, and "having called to see him a couple of days ago, and being "alone with him, we had a long conversation about Italian "affairs. Having the time, and the opportunity being favorable, I told him that, if this war between them and the Pope "went on, it would be necessary that the king, for his own good "as well as yours, should decide as to the manner of availing "himself of your Lordships' assistance; and as this subject "was now under consideration, it would be well to review and "discuss what you were able to do, how you were situated, "and what service you could render the king. The first thing "to bear in mind, I said, was the fact that you were poor, and "that in consequence of the long wars in which you had been "engaged, and the expenditures which you had been obliged "to incur and from which you were not yet entirely liberated, "you could not be called powerful nor well supplied as regards "money. After that the geographical position of our territory "must be taken into consideration, being entirely surrounded "by the Pope and his allies, which made it easy for his Holi-

"ness, with but little expense to himself, to give you much "trouble, and subject you to much danger and enormous costs. "That the late inconsiderable demonstration of the Venetian "fleet had obliged you to send thousands of troops to Pisa, "which certainly could not have been done without costing "you large sums of money; and therefore it was necessary, "after having carefully considered the matter, that the king "should bear in mind, when he claimed your assistance against "the Pope, that your aid should be efficient and advantageous "to him, and not insufficient and hurtful. For if this aid was "not to be of great advantage to his Majesty, and only served "to saddle you with another war, the king would be obliged, not "only to return to your Lordships the aid lent him, but also "to add some of his own troops, so that where his Majesty has "now to provide for the defence of Ferrara, Genoa, the Friuli, "and Savoy, he would then also have to provide for the safety "of Florence and Tuscany. Such aid from you would therefore "be more injurious than useful to his Majesty; and for that "reason I begged him to be very careful and to weigh matters "maturely; for if they wanted to act wisely they must regard "this much as certain, that, if the war against the Pope went "any further, the Florentines would be of greatest assistance "to the king if they defended themselves with all the ability "they possess, so as not to need any help from his Majesty; "particularly considering the situation of their territory, and "the facility with which the Pope could attack them on so "many sides. When, therefore, the matter came to be discussed in council, and they wanted the Florentines to act "and speak, I begged him to see that their purposes respecting "the Florentines should be well weighed and digested; for if "these were carefully considered, I doubted not that on the "whole the resolutions of the council thereupon would also be "wise. And that it behooved his Lordship more than any one "else to see to this, because he understood Italian affairs better "than any of the other members of the council. It seemed to "me that Robertet was pleased with my arguments, and he "showed me that he had taken notes of them. Nevertheless, "I could not rid myself of the idea which I have stated in a "previous letter, namely, that they desire anyhow to implicate "you openly in this war, in case it should be pushed on; and "consequently I do not cease to say the same thing to the "others, doing so, however, always in such a manner as not "to allow them to imagine that I say all this merely to avoid "observing the stipulations of the treaty." But where the reasons are so palpable and manifest such suspicions ought not to be entertained.

The king will leave here on Sunday or Monday next to go to Tours, where that Council is to be held which was originally convoked to meet at Orleans. He still intends to carry out his project in the spring. "And as I have written before, it will "make a brilliant show if England and the Emperor stand by "him; but if these should fail him, and the Swiss hold to the "Pope, then his Majesty will confine himself exclusively to the "protection of his own states; and it is believed that he will "not be able to attempt any other enterprise unless he shall "first have detached some of these Swiss. All others who "may have need of his Majesty must have patience."

Great hopes are founded here upon the coming of Monseigneur de Gurck. It was said at first that he was to start on the 13th, but nothing further has been heard of him. The imperial ambassadors manifest not the least apprehension as to any discord between the Emperor and the king of France; and they have said that within a few days the Pope would have such a dog at his heels as would make him think of other things than making war upon Ferrara. They report that three thousand Bohemian infantry and two thousand German cavalry are coming through the Friuli to attack the Venetians. Time will show whether this be true or not.

"Since writing the above, I have spoken with the ambassa-"dor from Ferrara, who tells me that it has been decided that "Chaumont is immediately to send three hundred lances and "two thousand infantry to Parma, where they are to join the "fourteen hundred infantry which the Duke has at Reggio. "Their object will be to go and retake Modena, in the event "of the Pope's army attacking Mirandola; but if the Papal "army remains at Modena, then the above-mentioned troops "on the one hand, and on the other hand those that are with "Monseigneur de Chatillon will attack the Pope's forces at "Modena; and the ambassador has no doubt that, if these "orders are not changed or the Pope's forces not greatly "increased, the Pope's army will be obliged to withdraw, "whether he will or not."

A proclamation by order of the king has been published here to-day, and is to be published throughout the entire realm, that no one shall dare to send to Rome in relation to church benefices or any other clerical object, under penalty of losing life and property; and at the same time the king has released all his subjects from their obedience to the Pope. It is well known here that the Pope boasts of having a treaty of peace with the king of France in his pocket, and this has increased the indignation against him.

I assure your Lordships that it is quite possible that this may be true to-day; but if the king succeeds in effecting a firm alliance with the Emperor, the Pope will find that he has been led into error, so that if any one were to tell him so, he would be telling him the truth. And if his Majesty does not avail himself of this occasion for his own advantage, he may very likely have reason to repent it; for to detach the Emperor from the king of France, he would in all reason have to give and promise him greater advantages than what the king of France can offer and give. And as I have already written in a former letter, his Majesty of France will not refuse any conditions that the Emperor may demand, for every other wound and every other injury will seem to him more honorable and bearable than those inflicted upon him by the Pope. Whether waking or sleeping, the king thinks and dreams of nothing but the wrong which he imagines he has received at the hands of the Pope, and his mind is filled with nothing but thoughts of revenge. I have been told again by a person high in authority, that the Emperor aims at nothing less than to engage the king in a partition of Italy between them.

I have no other news to communicate to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

BLOIS, 27 August, 1510.

LETTER XV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My last letter was of the 27th, in which I reported all that occurred to me of interest, and yesterday after dinner I received your Lordships' despatches of the 17th, with a copy of the letter to Pandolfini. I communicated to Robertet what you had decided "with reference to the coming of Giovanni "Girolami, for I could not speak to the king about it, as he "had never been willing to say the least word on the subject, "and there was no occasion to mention it to others. Robertet "was pleased with your decision, but nevertheless said that he "feared, if the Pope wanted now to treat, it would be too late; "still the negotiations could do no harm, provided due regard "was had to the king's honor. He told me that the Pope's "forces had gone to Mirandola, where they encountered the "French and met with a terrible repulse." He told me also that an agent from Germany had arrived per post, and brought amongst other news the positive departure of Monseigneur de Gurck on the 13th instant. "He does not approve that you "should have excused your not sending the troops by alleging "the negotiations with Rome; for the king does not wish that "it should be thought that the attempt to make peace had originated with him, and for that reason he did not want to "talk with me about it, nor would he permit that any of his "ministers should write to you about it; he desired that the "whole should be regarded as coming from you. Your having "mentioned it to Chaumont was therefore bad, and his Majesty "is very much displeased about it. He approves my silence on "the subject at the meeting of the council to-day, as I shall relate more particularly hereafter." I had this conversation with Robertet yesterday evening at the first hour of night, and after the following circumstances had occurred. "So soon as "I had received your Lordships' despatch, and had learned the "contents of your letter to Pandolfini respecting your Lordships' resolution about the troops asked for by Chaumont, I "went to see the king, but did not succeed in obtaining an "audience, as his Majesty was still suffering from the cough, "and was at the time locked in with the queen; and therefore, "so as not to lose any time, I went to the Chancellor's hotel "where the council was assembled. Having been admitted "to their presence, I told them that before your Lordships "had received my letter, which I had been charged by the "council to write to you on the 3d instant, and by which his "Majesty the king requests that your Lordships should hold "your troops in readiness to march at any moment that the

"Grand Master asked for them, in the event of the Pope's renewing his attempt against Genoa, the Grand Master had "sent an express to your Lordships with the request immediately to send your troops into Lombardy to be employed "there in the service of the king. Whereupon your Lordships, "desirous above all to observe the treaty stipulations, wanted "without delay to order their mobilization. But as it required "some little time to expedite them, you wished, in the interest "of the king as well as your own, during that interval to point "out to his Majesty and to Chaumont the importance of such "a step, so that they might know that your Lordships had "foreseen all the evils that could result from it. And therefore you gave them to understand that it would be well for "his Majesty to bear in mind that his enemy was the Pope, "whose forces completely enveloped the Florentine territory "on all sides; and to demand now that your Lordships "should send your troops away from home would in reality "be nothing less than to demand leaving you unarmed in "the very midst of your enemies, by whom you might at any "moment be crushed; and that this would necessarily lead "to one of two evils, namely, either that you would be overwhelmed, or that the king not only would be obliged at "once to send your troops back to you, but would also have "to add some of his own; and that in addition to the cost of "defending Ferrara, aiding the Emperor, opposing the Swiss, "and guarding Genoa, his Majesty would also, at his own considerable expense, have to defend Tuscany and Florence, or "submit to their loss. And that consequently your Lordships "begged them to be pleased to consider, on the one hand, the "advantage to be derived from sending your Lordships' troops "away from home, which would be absolutely null; and on the "other hand, the damage which it would cause to his Majesty's "interests, as well as the dangers to which it would expose "those of your Lordships, which would indeed be serious. And "that I did not believe the council had ever entertained a more "hazardous resolution, and one that would in all respects be "useless and full of danger. And that for these reasons your "Lordships had wished me to bring these considerations once "more before the council, as there was still time; and that "your Lordships had no doubt but what they would have to "recognize the truth of this, that the Pope would be more "effectually curbed by leaving our men-at-arms in Tuscany, "than by sending them elsewhere. And as I had told them "before, so now I reaffirmed it, that if this war with the Pope "went on, it would be advantage enough for the king not to be "obliged to have the trouble of defending you, considering the "situation of your territory, as well as your weakness and the "exhausted condition of your treasury.

"It seemed to me advisable to dwell mainly upon the subject "of expense and of danger to them as well as to your Lordships, without touching any other points, for if I had referred "to any other point that depended upon them, it would have "excited either their anger or their scorn and derision; for, as "Girolami knows, Robertet is the only person fully cognizant "of the whole matter. And although it was with the consent "of the king that they have entered upon this affair, which "was initiated by Robertet, the others having merely followed "him, yet it is necessary to manage this negotiation discreetly, "and not to publish it to the whole world. They all listened "to me with great attention, and when I had finished they said "that I had spoken wisely; that they would see the king that "very morning, and believed they should be able to give me a "satisfactory answer, for they knew how necessary it was to "save your Lordships and not to expose you to danger."

This morning after Mass, as the king was walking in the garden, I approached his Majesty and told him all I had said yesterday to the council, adding moreover what I thought proper to sustain my arguments. His Majesty said in reply, that he would think of it all, and would then let me have his answer. After that I spoke with every member of the council separately, and solicited each one to try and obtain the king's reply as soon as possible, pointing out to them the importance of avoiding delay. They told me to come to the council today, and I accordingly went there after my dinner, but had to wait a long time before being admitted, "and then the Chancellor said to me that, the gentlemen of the council having "heard the statement I had made to them this morning on the "part of your Lordships, and as the reasons I had adduced "seemed to them sound, and knowing as they did the character "of the Pope and the situation of your dominions, they accepted the good will of your Lordships the same as though "you had actually sent the troops; and that they had con-

"cluded it would be best that your troops should remain in "Tuscany. They wished, however, that your Lordships should "hold the troops in readiness, as also the infantry you have at "Lunigiana, so that they might be promptly sent to support "the king's interests in case the Pope should attempt to molest "Genoa. That they did not give me this as a formal answer, "but merely as a resolution formed amongst themselves; that "to-morrow, however, after having seen the king, they would "give me a final answer. I did not think it worth while to "discuss their reply any further; for on the one hand I do not "think you could well refuse to succor Genoa, and on the other "hand they ask that for which they have no present necessity. "For if the French army is superior to that of the Pope, and "the Swiss do not pass the Alps, then I do not see what the "Pope could possibly do at Genoa. And thus I left the council to await their final and complete answer to-morrow, which "ought to be the same as what I have written above, unless "letters should arrive meantime from Chaumont that would "disturb matters by some sinister interpretation. I have "omitted no effort to bring this matter to a conclusion to-day, "but have not been able to obtain anything further." Thus far I have written to-day, the 30th.

This is the 31st, and this morning before Mass, at the moment when Monseigneur de Paris and Monseigneur the Treasurer Robertet were coming from the king, I joined them; "and "then Robertet told me that his Majesty had confirmed the "resolution of the council precisely as the Grand Chancellor had "stated it to me yesterday evening; namely, that your troops "are to remain in Tuscany, but that you are to hold them in "readiness, and the infantry which you have at Lunigiana likewise, so that thay may at a moment's notice be able to render "assistance to Genoa, whenever a necessity for it should arise."

Two days ago a proclamation was published here, forbidding any one, on pain of corporal punishment and fine, to go or send to Rome on any business with the Pope or the Apostolic Chamber. I learn from a friend "that the French army have orders "to take Piombino if they can, and to sack it. If this be true, "then the affair may possibly be over by this time."

The king leaves on Monday next for Tours, to assist at the Council which he has ordered to be held there. *Valete!*

Blois, 30 August, 1510, — retained till 31st.

I beg to remind your Lordships most respectfully of the request made in a previous letter, to let me have fifty scudi through the agency of Panciatichi.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Secret.

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LETTER XVI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

My last was of the 30th ultimo, but was forwarded on the 31st. I sent it in duplicate, one through Bartolommeo Panciatichi at Lyons, and the other by the royal post to care of Francesco Pandolfini. The substance of that letter was, that after considerable delay I have obtained from the king that your troops are to remain in Tuscany, but that you are to keep them on foot the same as the infantry which you have at Lunigiana, so that they may at any moment go to help Genoa, whenever it might become necessary. Girolami arrived yesterday, and brought me your Lordships' letters of the 22d, and repeated to me verbally what your Lordships had written me respecting the negotiations with Rome, and about the troops. The matter of the troops being settled, there is no occasion to say anything more on that subject.

As to the negotiations with Rome, I repeated to Robertet what I had already told him according to your previous letters, and he made me the same answer, namely, that we must wait and see what will come of it. This morning I spoke with his Majesty the king, and told him that troops were being raised at Perugia and at Sienna, and that the Pope's army was being increased. I also pointed out to his Majesty that by the capture of Modena his Holiness still more completely surrounded your dominions, and became daily more threatening; and that your Lordships desired to have his Majesty informed of this for the sake of having his Majesty's advice and assistance when you should stand in need of it. His Majesty replied, that I should write you on every occasion unhesitatingly to help yourselves, and that he should not fail you, as he had already said several times. He told me also, that he had at this moment fifteen thousand infantry in his pay; that he had to render help at many points, but that all would be settled at one blow; that he wished me to see Robertet, and make him show me what he had directed him to write to Chaumont. Thereupon I went to see Robertet, who showed me that the king had written formally to Chaumont as follows: "The governor of Genoa informs us "that the Pope desires to change the government of Florence, "and therefore, as we have already written, we do not want "you to call for any troops from the Florentine government, as "we wish that they should employ them for their own defence; "and write to their Lordships boldly to prepare for anything "that may happen, and that in case of need you will not fail "them."

I did not neglect to do my duty with Robertet, and to remind him that we wanted facts at the proper time; and that even now it was necessary to take active measures against the Pope, or things would not go well; and that if Ferrara was lost, it would involve other losses, that would bring shame to the king and injury to his friends. Robertet answered that the Pope needed a good thrashing; and at these words he laughed and slapped me on the shoulder, as much as to say, and he will get it very soon. More than that I could not get out of him; although he said that he would be glad to see a couple of hundred more of French lances pass the Apennines, but that they would have to get them together first, and see what the Swiss were going to do.

Your Lordships wish to know the intentions of the king of France; I think my letters must have pretty well informed you upon that point. However, his Majesty is waiting for the spring, and meantime he is negotiating with the Emperor, and is making all other necessary preparations for his enterprise. He would like to temporize until spring, and spend as little money as possible, for all these little expenditures put him in a bad humor. This reason, and the belief that the Duke of Ferrara is able to defend himself, have caused the troubles at Modena; and the same reasons may cause other similar troubles, to his own detriment and that of a third party; for he hopes that by his mere coming he will at once settle all troubles, and looks upon all money spent before that as good as thrown out of the window. It is true, he could very well send two hundred more lances to Ferrara, which might save it and would not involve any extra expense. It is not his Majesty's fault that this is not done, but it is the fault of those who manage the details of the king's business here and in Lombardy. God grant that time may not show how great a loss the death of the Cardinal d'Amboise has been to the king as well as to others; for were he living now, Ferrara would never have suffered so much. For the king is not accustomed to attend to the details of all these things and neglects them, whilst those whose duty it is to attend to them take no authority upon themselves either to act or to remind the king what he ought to do; and so, whilst the physician gives no thought to the sick man, and the servant forgets him, the patient dies.

During my interview with Robertet, a painter brought a portrait of the late Cardinal d'Amboise, which caused Robertet to exclaim with a sigh, "O, my master, if thou wert living, we should now be with our army at Rome!" This exclamation confirms me more fully in all I have said above.

I had written thus far when Robertet suggested that it would be well that Giovanni Girolami should report in person to his Majesty what your Lordships had done with regard to the negotiations with Rome after his arrival at Florence. Accordingly he did so, and his Majesty was well satisfied with all the measures you have taken; so that as his Majesty manifests his views in relation to this negotiation more clearly than before, the subject might now be treated more openly here as well as at Rome. God grant that some good beginning may be made in this matter, before they change their opinion or disposition here!

I have nothing new to communicate to your Lordships, and can only confirm all I have written before. As to the Swiss, everything is being done to try and effect some arrangement with them, and I learn from good authority that they have already secured eight of the Cantons. If the king's troops with the Grand Master withdraw from the Swiss frontier, it may be taken as an indication that terms have been made with them; but if they remain there, then we may conclude that some apprehension as regards the Swiss still prevails. But whenever they do withdraw, then your Lordships will be able to get more prompt and reliable information about it through Pandolfini.

I have told your Lordships in a former letter as to what measures had been taken with regard to Ferrara, and shall therefore not repeat it now. The reported loss of the city cannot be true, for we have no news of it here, and there seems to be no apprehension of it here.

The king leaves to-morrow for Tours, where the council is to meet. God grant that all may go for the best! *Valete!*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli,

Blois, 2 September, 1510. *Secret.*

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LETTER XVII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

In my last of the 2d, I repeated, amongst other things, what I had written on the 31st ultimo, namely, that the king had decided that your troops should remain in Tuscany for the protection of your dominions; and that his Majesty had been induced, moreover, in accordance with your wishes, to send two hundred lances over the Apennines in support of Tuscan interests in case they should be needed. The king is resolved to do this anyhow, whenever the whole or part of his troops are relieved from the necessity of watching the Swiss. I wrote you many details in relation to matters here, and refer to that letter respecting these things. Since then I have received your Lordships' letters of the 24th and the 25th, with copy of the one of the 22d, which require no further answer beyond what I have already written in my aforementioned letter. Still, as they contain some important news, I went to Robertet, in the absence of the king, and communicated it all to him, for which he charged me to thank your Lordships, although it was evident that he had already received the same information in some other way. "I reminded him again of the importance that the "king should look more closely to the interests of his friends "in Italy than what he had done hitherto; to which Robertet "replied as before, that all the present expenditures on the part "of the king had no other object than that; and that he had "at present more than sixteen thousand men in the field; and "that the Swiss, either by agreement or necessity, would be "obliged to leave the Church, and that thus the king would be "more at liberty to see to everything, for until now it had re-"quired no little effort on his part to hold the Swiss in check;

"for by thus restraining the Swiss the power of the Pope was "diminished, and the security of the king's friends increased. "After that, Robertet began to speak of the Pope, saying that "this attempt of his Holiness to make war upon the king of "France was simply foolishness, and that a month would not "pass without the Pope's becoming sensible of the situation in "which he had placed himself; that Monseigneur de Gurck was "now in Burgundy on his way here; and that if the king's life "was spared for another year we should see greater things "than had ever been seen before."

"Magnificent Signori, respecting the state of things here and "all the above arguments I can say no more than to repeat "what I have said and written before, that is to say, if the king "lives, and England and the Emperor stand firmly by him, then "your Lordships may count upon seeing him at Florence in the "month of March next. Either of these two sovereigns would "have to make very extraordinary demands of the king for him "not to concede them; and as his Majesty is entirely decided "not to go forward with his enterprise until next spring, it "results naturally that Ferrara must suffer meantime; and it "may well be that others will likewise have to suffer; for his "Majesty dislikes every expense, and considers all money spent "now as just so much thrown away. But as your Lordships "say in your letter of the 22d that I must spur up the king "and remind him of his promises, I can assure you that I have "not remained quiet upon this point; and that I have stirred "myself so much that I have perhaps gone too far. When the "news came of the loss of Modena I went to the council and "complained of this disorder, and pointed out to them the danger to which this would expose Ferrara, and the necessity of "providing against it; and I concluded by telling them that, "if Ferrara were lost, it would carry with it the loss of Tuscany and that of all the allies of France beyond Ferrara; "thus making use of every argument that I thought it well "to employ. But the cause of all this tardiness on the part of "the king is what I wrote to your Lordships on the 2d instant, "and have repeated above.

"I learn from a friend that, at a late council held by his "Majesty in relation to Italian affairs and this new enterprise, "all with one accord concluded that the only way to have less "trouble and more security in Italy would be to increase the "power and influence of your Lordships. The same suggestion "has come to my ears from more than one quarter; thus, when "the king comes into Italy, as it is said and believed that he will, "and your Lordships are able to maintain yourselves in your "present position, you may, in compensation for the trouble and "expense which you apprehend, hope also for much good, provided your representative here manages the matter with skill "and prudence, as will doubtless be done by his Magnificence, "the ambassador who is coming here. And if in this affair "you run some risks, your Lordships are too intelligent not "to know that great results are not achieved without some "danger."

I expect your ambassador on Monday or Tuesday next at Tours; in the course of a couple of days I will post him thoroughly as to the state of affairs here, and then, with your Lordships' gracious permission, I hope to return to Florence.

At the king's departure from here the Pope's ambassador was informed that he was not to come to Tours, but was to remain here or go where he liked. "The ambassador therefore "decided to go to Avignon, which will cause a serious interruption in the negotiations with Rome; for it was he who had "conducted these negotiations until now, and I apprehend that "without him nothing satisfactory can be effected. I must not "omit to tell your Lordships that some persons here think that "there will be difficulty in the king's passing into Italy, for the "following three reasons: first, because the mass of the French "people will not submit to be burdened with extraordinary expenses; secondly, because the greater part of the gentlemen "will refuse to go to Italy, where so many in former invasions "have lost their fortunes and some their lives; and thirdly, because the queen and the first princes will not be satisfied to "have the king leave the realm and expose his person to danger. "The answer to all this is the same as was made ten years ago; "and that the king has always gone and come back when it "pleased him; for where everything depends upon the will "of one man, the others will soon want the same thing as himself." *Valete.*

5 September, 1510.

The king will take four or five days to reach Tours, as he intends stopping at some of the villages on the way, to hunt.

By that time the ambassador will have arrived, and as I cannot get any news in the mean time, nor transact any business with the court, this will probably be the last letter which your Lordships will receive from me in relation to passing events; for after the arrival of your ambassador, I shall leave it entirely to his Magnificence to write you. *Iterum valete!*

May it please your Lordships, if you have not done so already, to order Panciatichi to pay me fifty scudi, so that I may return, and repay to Niccolo Alamanni thirty scudi which he has lent me.

Servitor
Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret. apud Reg. Christ.

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LETTER XVIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

Yesterday I received your Lordships' letter of the 26th ultimo addressed to me, and yours of the 27th for the ambassador Roberto Acciaiuoli; as I have no news of him, I deemed it proper to read your letter to him. In regard to the further reasons which your Lordships say you have for not sending your troops into Lombardy, there is no occasion that his Magnificence should take any more trouble about this matter, or even speak of it any more, unless he should be spoken to about it; for it was all settled on the last day of August that your troops are to remain in Tuscany. The king is, moreover, disposed to send two hundred lances across the Apennines, provided that they are no longer wanted for the purpose of keeping the Swiss in check, or that there should already be French troops enough in Italy to accomplish both at the same time. This they ought to be able to do, for the three hundred lances that were lately sent for have arrived, also the one hundred pensionaries of the king, which constitute, in fact, a body of more than one hundred and fifty lances. I have strongly urged the sending of the two hundred over the Apennines, and shall recommend the ambassador to do the same; for if they are sent, it will give your Lordships all the advantages you desire; but if on the contrary they are not sent, then it will indispose the French to ask again for troops from you, when they see that you continually call upon them for troops; and thus it will in any event produce a good effect.

Since my letter of the 31st ultimo, I have written on the 2d and the 5th instant, giving your Lordships an account of matters here; nothing new of interest has occurred since then.

The imperial ambassadors are every day with the king; they are very active, and are expecting Monseigneur de Gurck. Great preparations are being made here for the meeting of the Ecclesiastical Council; and according to what I hear, a number of questions have been prepared for discussion. Amongst these I understand are the following: whether it is lawful for the Pope to make war upon a Christian prince without having first summoned and heard him; whether it is lawful for the Pope to make war upon his Most Christian Majesty, even after having first summoned him; whether a Pope who has obtained the Papacy by bribery, and sold the benefices of the Church, ought to be recognized as the Pope; whether a Pope who has been proved guilty of numberless disgraceful acts ought to be recognized as Pope. These and many other similar points are to be discussed by this Council; after which they will put into execution what they believe to be most dishonoring to the Pope and most advantageous for themselves. The other parts of your Lordships' letters, respecting the discussion of a new confederation and the advantages proposed to you, will all be communicated to your ambassador, who will govern himself in these questions according to your instructions and his own prudence.

We have nothing new from Ferrara calculated to diminish their hope of being able to defend that state; and as to the Swiss it would seem that, notwithstanding their having seized the pass, the French still hope confidently to win them over to their side, or to hold them in check.

It is now the twentieth hour, and a messenger has just arrived from the ambassador notifying me that his Magnificence will be here this evening. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

TOURS, 10 September, 1510.

COMMISSION TO THE INTERIOR OF THE STATE.

PATENT.

WE, THE TEN OF LIBERTY AND BALIA OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC,

Make known to whomever these present letters patent may come, that the bearer thereof is Niccolo Machiavelli, son of Messer Bernardo, Secretary of our Illustrious Signori, who is sent by order of our magistracy to enroll all who are to serve in the cavalry in our pay.

And therefore we command all the Rectors to whom the said Machiavelli may present himself to give him credit and render him service in all things that he may require in connection with this business.

And to our subjects we command to render him all obedience, if they value our good will or fear our displeasure.

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

EX PALATIO FLORENTINO, 12 November, 1510.

COMMISSION TO SIENNA.

PATENT AND PASSPORT.

WE, THE TEN OF LIBERTY AND BALIA OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC,

Make known to all to whom these our present letters patent may come, that we send the excellent Niccolo Machiavelli, our Secretary and citizen, to the Magnificent Signoria of Sienna, on business of our republic; and we command our subjects that for the love of us you will receive him in the most friendly manner, and render him all opportune good offices, so that he may with the greater ease reach his place of destination. This will be most agreeable to us, and will cause us to hold ourselves bound to render similar service to our aforesaid friends, whenever occasion shall arise; and we shall greatly commend our subjects therefor. *Bene valete.*

MARCELLUS.

EX PALATIO FLORENTINO, 2 December, 1510.

MISSION TO THE LORD OF MONACO.

PATENT AND PASSPORT.

WE, THE TEN OF LIBERTY AND BALIA OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC,

Make known to whoever may see these our letters patent, that the bearer thereof is the excellent Niccolo Machiavelli, our citizen and much beloved Secretary, whom we send on business of our republic to the illustrious Lord of Monaco.

And therefore we beg all of you friends, confederates, and protégés of our republic, and our subjects we command, to render to the said Niccolo all opportune aid and good offices that will conduce to the execution of his commission, for which we shall be grateful to all of you friends, confederates, and protégés, and shall highly commend our subjects for the same.

EX PALATIO FLORENTINO, 12 May, 1511.

The purpose of THE CONVENTION *to be concluded with* LUCIANO GRIMALDI, LORD OF MONACO, *is as follows:* —

1°. Between the exalted Florentine republic of the one part, and the said Signor Prince of Monaco of the other part, there shall be a good and true friendship, to endure for the next ten years to come; during which time they shall treat each the other, and *e converso*, and their troops and subjects, vessels, goods and merchandise, and every other thing, as good and real friends, and as good and real friends are used to treat each other.

Item. The vessels, men, and goods of the aforesaid Prince may, during the stipulated time, come, enter, and remain in every port belonging to the said exalted Florentine republic, freely and without any safe-conduct. And they may stop in port and lay in supplies of bread, water, provisions, and whatever else they may need, the same as if they were vessels and men belonging to Florence; paying nevertheless for these things the same dues as all other Florentines, and likewise paying the same customs duties as are paid by other Florentines. And *e converso* the Prince of Monaco shall observe the same conditions in his ports towards the vessels, men, and goods of the said exalted Florentine republic, and her subjects in all and for all.

It is nevertheless understood and declared that neither of the two parties, nor their subjects, can seize in the same maritime ports vessels, men, or goods, except such as belong to the enemies of the power in whose port such capture is made. And it is understood, by way of fuller explanation, that the port of Livorno comprises the shallows of Meloria.

Nor can either one of the said parties enter or remain in the ports of the other party with vessels, men, or goods captured from others than from his own enemies or those of the power to whom such port belongs; nor can such captured vessels be discharged, nor the goods or men therefrom put on shore. And in case such vessels should come in and stay and discharge there, as has been said, then either party can forbid the other to come to, enter, and remain in its ports, or to anchor there and lay in stores of bread, water, and other provisions, or anything else that they may need; and in such case neither of the parties shall be bound to the observance of the present friendship.

FOURTH MISSION TO THE COURT OF FRANCE.

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LETTERS PATENT.

Decemviri Libertatis et Pacis Reipublicæ Florentinæ, universis et singulis ad quos hæc nostræ patentes literæ inciderint, salutem.

Significamus vobis, qui nostro imperio paretis, mittere nos Nicolaum Machiavellum, civem et Secretarium nostrum dilectissimum, mandatarium ad Christianissimum Regem Francorum, mandamusque ob id vobis, ut transeuntem per loca nostra juvetis omni ea ope, qua illi opus erit ad pergendum securius et celerius suum iter; sic enim rem vobis dignam facietis, et gratissimam nobis. Amicos vero omnes alios, confederatosque Reipublicæ nostræ hortamur precamurque, si quid nostra amicitia meretur, faveatis illi, juvetisque iter quacumque ratione potueritis, ut incolumis citoque in Galliam pervenire possit, quo mittitur a nobis ad Regem Christianissimum; quod erit in primis gratissimum nobis, et quod semper habebimus beneficii loco. Bene valete.

Marc. Virgilius.

Ex Palatio nostro Florentino, die 10 Septembris, 1511.

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INSTRUCTIONS

GIVEN TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, SENT BY THE ILLUSTRIOUS TEN TO LOMBARDY AND FRANCE.

Deliberated on, 6 September, 1511.

Niccolo, — You are perfectly aware of all that has taken place here with regard to the Council to be held at Pisa; and on what grounds and for what reason we were disposed, on its first publication, to allow that Council to be held at Pisa; and that not many days afterwards we gave our full consent. But finding now that the greater part and the most substantial of these reasons no longer exist, and that we had offended the Pope by our course, and thereby exposed ourselves to the greatest danger, we have been forced by necessity to send you by post, and with the greatest possible despatch, first to those most reverend cardinals, and to the most illustrious Royal Lieutenant at Milan; and after that as far as the court of his Most Christian Majesty. And all our interest and aim in your mission is reduced to one single object; namely, to make every effort and use all means to have this Council, the beginning of which was so feeble and so perilous that an honorable and safe end can hardly be expected, abrogated by such means as can be found. Or if that cannot be, that it shall at least be transferred elsewhere; which ought now to be an easy matter, seeing what the attorneys of these cardinals have done at Pisa, and how by anticipation they have validated the reasons of this Pisan Council. And finally, if this cannot be done, then let us have, as a last resort, an adjournment for some months; as within that time various contingencies may arise that will enable the Council to arrive at a much better settlement of all these disorders. And even if no other result will be attained, still two or three months' time will be a great advantage and an immense convenience to us. And we think that such a delay should not be refused to us, as it is called for by the very season which we are about to enter upon, and by the condition in which this matter now stands. For it seems probable that those who have not arrived up to to-day will not come to encounter the winter season here; and moreover, the French prelates could under ordinary circumstances not reach the place in two months.

Travelling, therefore, with all possible speed, you will take the road to Milan; but before arriving at Bologna, you will carefully inform yourself as to the whereabouts of Santa Croce, Narbonne, San Malo, and Cosenza, who some three or four days ago were supposed to be at Borgo a San Donnino, and were to pass through here on their way to Pisa. When you have ascertained where they are, you will go to the place where you will find them together, and in speaking to them all at the same time and to each one separately you will give them to understand that they are on no account to come to Florence; pointing out the trouble to which they would expose us, and the danger in which our merchants would be placed, with all their goods and movables at Rome as well as elsewhere; advising, exhorting, and entreating them on no account to take this route. You will add that you are going to Milan to make known to the Royal Lieutenant the report that has been spread, and the consequent apprehensions that the Spanish troops are about to march towards Piombino, and that a fleet is being fitted out at Naples, and that the Pope has already taken the Duke of Termini into his pay, and has appointed him his captain; adding all that may occur to you according to what we have told you here verbally. But should you not find the aforesaid cardinals on your route, because of their having gone in another direction, then you will proceed direct on the way to Milan and France. We believe that with the above-mentioned cardinals you will not require any other credentials than the letters patent which you take with you, and which will suffice to prove your person and your mission.

Having attended to this matter, you will take the diligence for Milan, where you will see Francesco Pandolfini, and, after having communicated to him our present instructions, you will together call upon the Viceroy, but in your interview with him you will confine yourselves to communicating to him that, whilst sending you to the court of his Most Christian Majesty, we desired also that his Excellency should be informed of the object of this mission. And without touching upon anything else, you will relate to him what has taken place at Rome; and what may happen to our merchants any day there and elsewhere; also the apprehensions with regard to Piombino and the Spaniards, as we have stated above. The reason why we deem it proper for you not to enter upon any other subject with him is, that we do not wish the object of your mission known before your arrival at court. We desire, nevertheless, that you should inform Francesco of everything, not only of the particulars of these instructions, but also of what we have stated to you verbally, so that he may in future proceed in conformity with our views, and govern himself in his actions according to these instructions.

Having accomplished this at Milan, you will proceed with the same diligence and speed to the court of his Most Christian

Majesty. Immediately on arriving you will call to see Roberto,* and, after communicating to him these instructions, as well as what we have told you verbally, you will both together call upon his Majesty the king; and in addressing his Majesty you will begin by stating that we gave the concession of Pisa solely to please him; and then you will go on to show to what point matters have been brought here, and what has resulted and is likely to result in Rome, against our city as well as against our people and their goods. You will point out to his Majesty what our people have had to suffer in the way of interdicts, censures, war, and ransoms to be paid for persons and goods everywhere; and show the reasons why it has come to this, and what remedies there are for this state of things. And in explaining the cause of these evils to which we are subjected, you will remark that we have observed that the Emperor gives little or no attention to these matters; and that, whilst we believed that he would carry on the war advantageously, and that he was on his way to Florence, he was still near Trent, with little disposition to do anything more this year, and was constantly on the point of turning back. That he is carrying on most intimate negotiations with the Venetians, and has convoked a Diet in Germany for the day of San Gallo; and that all these things show manifestly that he gives little thought to our matters. To this may be added, that we have not heard of a single prelate's coming from that great country to take part in this council. In the same way it has been observed that the French prelates that are to come manifest such tardiness as to cause the belief that they do not come of their own free will. But as this might possibly cause displeasure to the king, it seems to us best you should not refer to it, unless perhaps merely in a passing word, so as not to give umbrage to his Majesty. There are still other and more important points to touch upon; one of which is that, according to what we hear, some of the cardinals named in the edicts dissimulate their real views, and under various pretexts delay their coming to Pisa. Another matter, and one that has astonished us very much, is that a council should have been opened by only three persons sent to Pisa, and these of such a character as they are; and that they have declared that they wanted the forts in their hands, which would promptly be filled with armed men. Owing to the lack of reputation of these persons, great disorders have occurred, so that the city found herself placed under an interdict, and that the heads of the religious establishments have declared against such a Council. All this is the consequence of having made so feeble a beginning, and not having sent men capable of defending their motives, and who might with proper authority have given due character and reputation to such an undertaking, which, once discredited, can hardly be carried to a satisfactory conclusion. In consequence of these disorders, the Pope, finding neither reputation, favor, nor power within the Council, has manifested the most vigorous resentment, and, having no one else upon whom to pour out his wrath, has discharged it all upon us; and thence all the dangers which threaten us, and which are so well known to you. These are increasing with every day; and it is not likely that the Council will gain in favor, having shown such weakness in the beginning, for everybody will be disposed to believe that its end will be similar to its beginning. And as no one at present accepts the reasons alleged in favor of this Council at Pisa, they will be still less acceptable in the future.

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* Roberto Acciaiuoli, Florentine Ambassador to the Court of France, where he arrived at the very moment of Machiavelli's departure, after having fulfilled the object of his previous mission to France.

The remedies for this state of things are in our judgment but few. Peace, however, would settle everything honorably, and relieve all parties from their present anxieties; but of this we do not wish you to speak, except as a last resort. After having shown to his Majesty how little is to be hoped for from this Council, and what has been the cause of its feebleness, you will make every effort to persuade and beg his Majesty to be pleased to have it discontinued, seeing how difficult it would be to carry it on. And if all these reasons do not satisfy his Majesty, then you must endeavor, by pointing out to him our present and future dangers, to persuade him to relieve us from this care and anxiety, and show him that now, since the initiative measures have been taken at Pisa, the Council might readily be transferred to some other locality. This is, in fact, what we should desire most in case you cannot obtain a discontinuance of the Council, and therefore we want you to urge it most vigorously, leaving nothing undone that can help to induce the king to consent to such a transfer.

The reasons for this are numerous. First of all, the holding of the Council at Pisa is really tantamount to holding it under the very hands of the Pope; for it may be taken for granted that it will at once provoke a fresh war by land and by sea, in which his Majesty would be obliged to take a hand, if he does not wish that his friends shall perish for having tried to please him. But such a war would not take place if the Council were held in a locality not so accessible to the Pope with his army and his allies. And then there is the fact that the Emperor has never been satisfied that the Council should be held in Pisa, which doubtless is the reason why he and the prelates of Germany have shown such indifference in the matter. There are furthermore the reasons which we have so many times written to Roberto Acciaiuoli; namely, the ruinous state of Pisa, the unproductiveness of the country, the bad harvest this year, and the fact that the place can so easily be harassed by a hostile fleet. Above all must it be taken into consideration, in connection with the first reason, that a war resulting from the holding of the Council in Pisa would be a very dangerous one, because all the states involved in it will necessarily be divided, some declaring for and some against the Pope. His Majesty will therefore have to bear in mind that, if matters take this course, the burden of the war will fall upon him, if not entirely, at least in great part. It is necessary, then, that by means of these reasons, and such others as may suggest themselves to you, you should strive to persuade his Majesty to be satisfied that we may henceforth refuse Pisa to any one for the purpose of holding such a Council.

And if you cannot even obtain this, then you must, as a last resort, make every possible effort that for two or three months to come no further action shall be taken in Pisa without a consultation between the cardinals and the other promoters of the Council, as they might possibly disagree. There would be a manifest and natural reason for such a consultation, as the cardinals are still in Lombardy, and the bishops and abbots have not yet made their appearance. You will also point out to his Majesty the great advantage of this, especially so far as we are concerned, for it would afford us the time the better to settle our own affairs and those of the nation. Nor would it be at all extraordinary that it should bring with it some other good results, and that it should dispose minds more favorably to a peace, which it would be most reasonable the Pope should desire, and to which his Majesty has always been well inclined. But of this peace it is necessary you should speak so as not to fail in any part of the object of your mission; at the same time urging and entreating his Majesty, for the purpose of avoiding the troubles of war, or for an infinity of other reasons, not to allow any opportunity to be lost that may present itself for concluding peace, but rather to seize every chance that may be given him, and to that end to proffer him all our best efforts and good offices. You must endeavor to learn what the results of your efforts may be, and what difficulties may present themselves; not only for the purpose of advising us, but also to enable us to do all that in your judgment may seem necessary to be done in the matter.

And we desire particularly that you should fully make known our disposition in this business, so that his Majesty the king and every one else may know that we have no aim or desire for anything else than peace; and that we shall ever be ready to do all that is possible and becoming to our quality to bring it about.

We remind you to write to us from Milan and from France, promptly and carefully, all that you may have done; what hope there is for the accomplishment of our desire, and what may ultimately be the result of this whole affair of the Council.

Ex Palatio Florentino, die 10 Septembris MDXI.

Decemviri Libertatis et Baliæ Reipubl. Flor.

LETTER I.

Magnificent and Illustrious Signori, etc.: —

I arrived here yesterday at dusk, and found here the Cardinals Santa Croce, San Malo, Cosenza, and San Severino. Santa Croce is lodged outside the citadel, and the other three within. I thought it proper to speak first with Santa Croce, partly because he is as it were their chief, and partly because I regard him as being in some way more friendly to your Lordships than the others. I had a long conversation with him in relation to the Council; and finally he thought it advisable that I should accompany him into the citadel to speak with the other cardinals; and just as we were starting to go, Cosenza and San Severino came to see him. The three withdrew and remained together some three hours or more, during which time they despatched both letters and messengers. After that they had me called in, and I repeated to the three together all that I had already said to Santa Croce. They then made me leave the room, and after a long consultation they came out themselves and told me to follow them to the Castle. There they went in to see San Malo, who was confined to his bed by an attack of gout; after having remained with him some time, they had me called in and made me repeat before San Malo what I had previously told them. The sum and substance of my remarks consisted in making known to them how greatly the Pope was irritated against your Lordships when he was informed of what had been done at Pisa,* the dangers to which our merchants had been and were still exposed, the threats which the Pope had made to attack you with his temporal and spiritual weapons; and that for that reason your Lordships had charged me to go per post to Milan to see the Viceroy, and make known to him the Pope's disposition and preparations, and your dangers, and to ask the Viceroy to suggest a remedy for all this. And that your Lordships had also commissioned me that, if on the way I should meet with their most reverend Lordships, I should make the same facts known to them; that you saw in all this two dangers, the one real and immediate, and the other a future danger. The present and real one was the plundering of your merchants and the interdict of your city, while war constituted the future danger. And to counteract the present danger, you begged their most reverend Lordships to be pleased not to come any nearer to Florence, so as to give our merchants time to settle their affairs; and that their reverend Lordships could do this without interfering with the Council, as none of the matters that were to be brought before it were ready; nor were you prepared to combat the Pope's temporal or spiritual powers. And then I said all that could be said in relation to the disorders that existed upon these two points, and begged them anew, in your Lordships' name, to be pleased to delay their further advance, which they could do perfectly well without interfering with their plans; and in my effort to persuade them, I omitted nothing that could possibly be said on the subject. I told them also of the preparations of the Pope, what they consisted in, and how much he expected from the Spaniards.

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* Certain initial acts had been done by the Council at Pisa on the 1st of September, to which allusion is made in the instructions.

Having spoken to them thus this last time in presence of San Malo, they had a long consultation amongst themselves, and then had me recalled, whereupon San Severino replied to me in the name of the others. The sum and substance of his remarks was in justification of their undertaking, and how acceptable it ought to be to all Christians and to the Almighty himself; and that the greater the participation in it, the greater would be the glory derived from it. And that when it was published six months ago that the Council would be held at Pisa, your Lordships ought to have prepared yourselves for all the consequences that might result from it, and that they could not understand how, after having had so much time, any further delay could be of advantage to you. After that he went on trying to prove to me that you had nothing to apprehend from war, because his Majesty the king of France had never had so many troops in Italy as at the present time. And here he magnified matters as much as possible, concluding finally by saying that they did not intend under any circumstances to come to Florence, but would go direct to Pisa by way of Pontremoli. That it would, however, be ten or twelve days before they should leave, as they intended to wait for the French prelates who would be here within that time, to the number of forty or more, and that they would come accompanied by learned doctors and preachers to enable them to raise the interdict; and that whoever opposed them would be adjudged an heretic. He alleged that in the year 1409, three years after your Lordships had acquired Pisa, you permitted a Council to be held there against a Pope of great sanctity; that that Council was opened only by cardinals, and that you then had manifested no fears, although the cause for that Council was not so just, nor was the support you then had so powerful as at present, when you have that of the king of France.

At this point the Cardinal Santa Croce spoke in turn, and confirmed all that San Severino had said, adding that for the love of Christ and for the good of the Church your Lordships ought cheerfully to assume the burden of this Council; that the Council at Basle had been begun by a single abbot, whilst in the present case there would be so many cardinals and prelates that they would be able to carry on work of much greater difficulty; that they intended to raise all interdicts, and would so confound the Pope that he would have other things to think of than excommunications or war.

I replied to such part of these remarks as seemed to me to require an answer, by an attempt to persuade them not to go any farther; but I could not move them to any other conclusion than what I have stated above, that is to say, that they would not hasten their departure from here, and would go to Pisa by way of Pontremoli.

When I spoke yesterday with the Cardinal Santa Croce alone, I concluded from what he said that they would have gone to Pisa ere this, if they had seen your Lordships more decidedly favorable to the Council; but seeing your irresolution had caused them to hesitate themselves. If this be so, then I believe that my representation may cause them to hesitate still more, for they seem not to consider themselves safe in Pisa; and this may perhaps produce an effect which might not be to the purpose, for they have always desired to have the French army with them, and would desire it still more now.

In fact, I learn this morning that they have sent a messenger to the Viceroy at Milan, to solicit him to come in person with three hundred lances to escort them to Pisa whenever they are prepared to go. I shall be at Milan to-night, and will see with Francesco what can be done to prevent this. In the reply which Santa Croce made in the presence of the other cardinals, he stated that it would anyhow be necessary to hold two or three sessions more at Pisa, and that then, to accommodate and please your Lordships, they would raise the Council and transfer it elsewhere.

I learned yesterday evening that San Severino was to leave here this morning for Germany, on a mission to the Emperor; the object being to persuade him to order his prelates to Pisa, with the promise that, after the Council had once been organized at Pisa, then it might be transferred wherever else his Majesty pleased. Another object of this mission is said to be the negotiation of a marriage between the Emperor and a

French princess; and also to try and recover from him certain castles in the Veronese territory that were formerly obtained from his father.

It is now two o'clock of the morning, and it is at this hour that San Severino is to start. I recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

AL BORGO A SAN DONNINO, 13 September, 1511.

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LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

On Saturday I wrote to your Lordships from Borgo a San Donnino, and informed you particularly of the interview I had with the cardinals. I left my letter with Giovanni Girolami, who promised me to send it by the king's post; and presuming that you have received it, I do not repeat its contents. Since then I have arrived here and explained my commission to the Viceroy. The particulars of my interview with him, and his reply, will be reported to you by Francesco Pandolfini, having conformed in all my proceedings to his orders, and therefore I refer to his Magnificence. It is now the twenty-second hour, and I am just about to leave for the court to execute the commission of your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

MILAN, 15 September, 1511.

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LETTER III.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

My last was of the 17th; I sent it through Pandolfini by royal post. Machiavelli arrived here safely day before yesterday. Besides your Lordships' letter of the 10th, which he brought with him, he has informed me of the object of his mission; and as Robertet happens to be here, and his Majesty the king being about three leagues from here, we thought it best not to go to see him the first day, but to wait until the next morning when we should find Robertet with the king, so that he could be present at our audience in case it should be necessary to expedite some order. We therefore went next morning to court, having previously examined the instructions and made a brief of all the arguments that could influence the king to enter into your Lordships' views. Accordingly we presented ourselves before his Majesty, and after the first homage of Machiavelli and the customary ceremonies, we read to his Majesty a statement prepared from your Lordships' commission, in which we had embodied all the arguments that seemed most suitable and calculated to produce the desired effect of making his Majesty relish the better and consider with more attention the propositions we had to make. His Majesty listened cheerfully and attentively, showing that he attached great value to your representations and advice.

Our statement contained three principal points, the first of which was to urge his Majesty to make peace, and dissolve the Council by some reasonable agreement, and to offer him mediators, etc. To this the king replied, "Would to God that "you could bring matters to that point, for there is nothing "that I desire so much, and I should feel very grateful to whoever brings it about," — showing us that upon that point he had always the same desire, and that he had never agreed to this Council except for the purpose of bringing the Pope to some agreement; and therefore he said, "If now we were to raise "the Council, the Pope would not want to hear anything more "of peace." To this we replied, that that idea seemed to us without foundation, inasmuch as, according to all the indications, this Council was more apt to provoke war than peace, and that it was this apprehension that caused the Pope to look rather to a resort to arms than to ask for peace. To our second proposition, which had for its object a change in the locality where the Council was to be held, the king answered promptly and resolutely: "This also is impossible, for I see "no way in which it could be done, as it is necessary that the "cardinals and prelates should proceed to Pisa for certain "indispensable acts that have to be done there. But measures "could be taken so that they shall remain there as short a time "as possible, and this I shall urge upon them." He could not precisely specify these acts, not being familiar with the terms employed in business of this kind. And then his Majesty added: "For some days we have thought of everything that "could relieve us from this burden and embarrassment, and "have had the whole subject revised and studied minutely, so "as to see whether it could be arranged that the Council should "not be held at Pisa; but having in the first instance been con-"voked in that city, it has been found that the Council cannot "be removed from there without prejudice to our rights. If it "had been possible, we should gladly have had it transferred to "Vercelli, to which place the cardinals and other members of "the Council could easily remove for this purpose, after having "made at Pisa their first, second, and third *station*" (that is the word he used). "I do not, therefore, see the possibility of yield-"ing to your demands. And moreover, I cannot act without the "will and consent of the King of the Romans and the cardinals, "with whom I have agreed not to do anything in relation to this "business without their concurrence. And after having given "them the order to proceed there, and having invited our Galli-"can Church to take the same way, I do not see how I can "now retract."

And as we observed upon this point that the Council, if held at Pisa, would not merely bring upon us the censures of the Church, and reprisals upon the persons and goods of our merchants, but would also kindle a war of such a character that the republic could not support it, and which would expose him to the gravest troubles and endless expense, his Majesty replied that it was necessary that the merchants should be relieved as much as possible, although he really did not believe that the Pope would harm them in any way. As to the war that might result from it, his Majesty did not seem to fear it much, as he did not believe that the king of Spain would take a hand in it, for he had had most excellent letters and several embassies from that sovereign; and therefore he advised us to have no apprehensions upon that point. His Majesty and Robertet, as well as ourselves, came back several times to this subject, and we believe that we did not omit a single argument calculated to decide the king; so that his final conclusion was, that it was his will and desire to gratify your Lordships, but, as the Council had once been convoked at Pisa, it was impossible now to transfer it elsewhere. So far as we could judge from the King's countenance, gesticulations, and words, as well as those of Robertet, we concluded that it was against his own inclination that his Majesty had refused to accede to your Lordships' request, both on account of the danger to which it exposed us, in which he would be equally involved, as well as on account of the expense and anxiety which it would cause him; and that, if he alone had to decide this matter, he would not have refused. But the considerations referred to above seem to have prevented his complying with your Lordships' wishes; and these considerations are the conventions made with the Emperor and the cardinals, his having directed all the clergy of the Gallican Church to attend the Council at Pisa, his having from the first published Pisa as the locality for its meeting, and finally his unwillingness to abandon these reasons without the Council's having assembled at least once in that place.

Besides these there is another reason, which the king does not state, but which we have learned from Robertet, and which is of no less importance than all the others; namely, his Majesty fears lest some, if not all, of the cardinals would be angered by such a transfer, and that in their anger they might cause the King of the Romans to change, knowing perhaps how easy it is to turn him, having but quite lately had proof of his want of firmness. Having spent considerable time in this discussion, and being convinced that we could not obtain any other result upon the first two points, we came to the third, which had for its object to gain a delay of two or three months. The advantage of this, we argued, would be that, under color of being able within that time to negotiate some agreement, we should have the opportunity of seeing the issue of the Pope's illness, of increasing the difficulties of war by delaying it until near winter, and finally of giving more time to our people for securing themselves more effectually. His Majesty was persuaded by our arguments, and promised us to do all he could, so that between now and All Saints no one should go to Pisa; and he directed that the cardinals be written to, to defer their departure. But I do not believe that his Majesty wants the cardinals openly to know the motives of this postponement, and therefore it will be done by various expedients. The first one will be not to send them copies of the safe-conduct which they have demanded; for they have declared that they will under no circumstances go to Pisa unless they have the original safe-conduct, or a copy of the same; and therefore they will not be written to by this post, so as the longer to delay their reply. This first expedient will accomplish what has been promised to us; and this delay seems to us to the purpose, as the cardinals will not go any farther without being thoroughly secured.

Your Lordships can see now what we have done and what we have gained up to the present; and for the future we shall not fail, not only to see that the promises are fulfilled, but also to endeavor to obtain what until now has been refused.

Respecting English affairs I do not see that there is any ground for apprehensions, and here they seem to feel entirely secure upon that point. They have recently again had letters from that sovereign and from his council, which have given great satisfaction. Of the Emperor nothing of particular importance is known, except that four days ago news came that he had gone in the direction of Trent, whereupon it was immediately decided that the imperial ambassador should leave in all haste to find his Majesty. I believe the reason for this was the fear lest the Emperor should change his intentions; and therefore they have sent his own ambassador back to him to keep him firm to his purpose, and to conclude some arrangement with him.

Since then, and just as the ambassador was about to leave, fresh advices have come from the Emperor which caused them not to carry out that intention, as these advices brought satisfactory assurances from that quarter.

Not having anything further to communicate at this time, I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

ROBERTUS ACCIAIOLUS,

BLOIS, 24 September, 1511. *Orator.*

P. S. — In speaking of peace the king charged me in the greatest secrecy to write to your Lordships, and to urge you to make every possible effort to bring about such a peace; not, however, on the part of his Majesty, but as being entirely on your own account. And to request your Lordships most particularly to let it be known only to very few persons. And to act in this matter with the greater confidence, your Lordships must know that his Catholic Majesty has given the king to understand that, for the purpose of facilitating an arrangement so far as in his power, he would be willing to let Bologna remain in the present state. Monsignore di Tivoli has been informed in part of the object of Machiavelli's coming, and was well satisfied with it. He has promised to use his good offices with the Pope in favor of the object desired by your Lordships.

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LETTER IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

I arrived here last Monday at an early hour of the morning; it was impossible for me to reach here sooner, having lost three days at Borgo a San Donnino and Milan. I presented myself before his Majesty the king in company with his Magnificence the ambassador, who has written you a detailed report of all we did, to which I refer in all respects. I shall remain here so long as it may please his Majesty; that is to say, so long as he may deem it necessary for the object of my mission, which cannot exceed six or eight days. After that I shall return with his Majesty's gracious permission, and the good pleasure of your Lordships, to whom I ever recommend myself.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BLOIS, 24 September, 1511. *Secret.*

COMMISSION TO PISA AT THE TIME OF THE COUNCIL.*

I.

THE TEN TO THE CARDINALS THAT WERE AT PISA.

2 NOVEMBER, 1511.

REVERENDISSIMI IN CHRISTO PATRES, ETC. : —

Mittimus ad reverendissimas dominationes vestras Nicolaum Machiavellum civem et Secretarium nostrum ; mandavimusque illi multa quæ referat coram reverendissimis dominationibus vestris: quibus placeat super eis nostra de causa fidem illi habere certissimam. Quæ bene valeant.

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* The two preceding legations and the present commission to Pisa relate to the celebrated differences between Pope Julius II and Louis XII., king of France, at whose instigation a General Ecclesiastical Council had been convoked at Pisa, for the purpose of deposing Pope Julius II., who had contemptuously rejected all offers of peace, and had carried his violence so far as to have the French ambassador arrested, and had launched interdicts and excommunications against his enemies. The Emperor of Germany, Maximilian I., had joined the king of France in the project of deposing Pope Julius II. by a General Council; having himself the extraordinary idea of assuming the papal tiara with his imperial crown, in the event of Pope Julius's deposition by the Council. The Florentines at the request of the king of France had consented to allow the Council to be held at Pisa; but they soon became alarmed at the dangers threatened in consequence by the vengeance and violence of the Pope, with the Venetian army at the north, and that of the Spaniards at the south. The Signoria saw no other way to avert these dangers than to endeavor to persuade the king of France to dissolve the Council and make peace with the Pope. It was for this purpose that Machiavelli had been sent on these missions to the court of France, where Roberto Acciaiuoli was at the time the accredited ambassador.

The Florentine Signoria had already sent several commissioners to Pisa to be present at the meetings of the Council; and after Machiavelli's return from France, where he had successfully accomplished his mission, he was sent by the Signoria to take a body of troops to Pisa, as a guard to watch the Floren-

II.

THE TEN TO THE SEIGNEUR DE LAUTREC.

2 NOVEMBER, 1511.

ILLUSTRIOUS SEIGNEUR: —

We send to your Lordship our citizen and Secretary, Niccolo Machiavelli, to whom we have entrusted certain matters which we desire your Lordship should know; and we therefore beg your Lordship to give him the most entire credence.

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III.

THE TEN TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

3 NOVEMBER, 1511.

We have nothing to communicate to you by this letter except that since your departure from here we have heard from Rosso Ridolfi and Antonio Portinari that matters are going on quietly enough at Pisa; and therefore it seems to us proper to say to you that, unless some special necessity should occur for the three hundred infantry, you will not raise them. But should you see that they are necessary, then you will act according to the original order given you on the subject. We have nothing else to say, for whatever is new here we write to Rosso Ridolfi, from whom you will learn all we communicate to him.

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IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

You will have learned through the letters from the Lords Commissioners how matters are going on here. By these presents I have thought to make known to you that I went

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tine interests; and above all to dispose the prelates to leave that city, which had been conceded with the utmost reluctance by the Florentine Signoria for the purpose of this Council.

this morning to make a visit to the Cardinal Santa Croce, with whom I had a long interview, my sole object being to point out to him the difficulties which this locality and the times bring with them, and which will constantly increase, the longer the cardinals remain, and the more people come here, and therefore your Lordships begged him to excuse them, etc., etc. To this the Cardinal replied, that although there was no abundance, yet the scarcity was supportable, and that therefore they did not complain. That they were fully aware that the palaces were not equal to those of Milan, nor life so agreeable as in France; still, if either on their own account, or on account of your Lordships, it was deemed advisable to change the locality, it might be done.

I told him that I should speak upon this point only according to my own opinion, and that I believed it would be a wise thing to go from here; for, first, they would be relieved of the anxiety respecting lodgings; and secondly, the removal of the Council from his immediate neighborhood would make the Pope cool down, and render him less active in opposing it by arms and other means; and thirdly, by the transfer of the Council to some place, either in France or Germany, the people there would be found more disposed to obey than what the people of Tuscany are, because the Emperor and the King can control their people more easily than what your Lordships ever could do. And as the opportunity seemed to me favorable, I entreated him not to consent to have your Lordships constrained to do what you neither could nor should do; and that I believed that the coming of one man voluntarily to this Council would give it more reputation than twenty that were forced to come against their will. I went on trying to persuade him to the best of my ability, and finally concluded by coming back to the proposition to remove the Council from here, but as coming entirely from myself; demonstrating to him that it would be a wise and most useful thing to do, and calculated to produce the best effects.

The Cardinal replied to me that he would speak with his colleagues about it, but that it would be necessary to write to France and to the Emperor; whereupon I reminded him that at San Donnino he and the other cardinals had told me that, after two or three sessions of the Council at Pisa, it should be transferred to another place. He admitted the truth of this, and said that he would think of what they ought to do; and that I might rest assured that nothing unbecoming would be asked of your Lordships. "In fact," added he, "your Signori "will not be satisfied that we should dismiss those priests who "will not obey us." To which I replied, that I did not know what support your Lordships could render them, but as to dismissing the priests, you had nothing whatever to do with it; and that that was a matter which they must settle amongst themselves.

His Eminence said nothing further on that point, but it seems to me that it will not be long before some new demand will be made of your Lordships, and of a sort that will not be very much to your mind. I have communicated all this to the Lords Commissioners, and they have thoroughly looked into the matter, and will make a report to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself. *Valete!* *

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
Secret.

PISA, 6 November, 1511.

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* It may not be amiss to give here the relation of the sessions of the Council held at Pisa, at which Machiavelli was present, and which were reported by the Commissioners, who, in writing to the Signoria at Florence, say that with regard to these reports they refer to thé wisdom of Machiavelli himself, he having greater experience in these matters than themselves.

"This morning, the 5th of November, the most reverend Monsignore di Santa Croce celebrated a solemn mass in the cathedral, assisted by the other three cardinals, Monseigneur de Lautrec, and the other archbishops, bishops, and prelates, all seated in the greatest silence and devotion. After the mass, the deacon, who was the Abate Zaccaria, proclaimed twice in a loud voice, 'Let all laymen leave the choir.' And then all the bishops put on their mitres, and Monsignore di Santa Croce seated himself before the altar, turning his face towards the prelates and the people, and intoned the Psalm of David, 'Deus qui glorificatur in Concilio Sanctorum, magnus et terribilis super omnes, qui in circuita ejus sunt"; and then exhorted all the prelates most earnestly to dispose themselves by prayers and vigils for this holy Council, appealing to them with many other words, etc., even unto tears. After this discourse Monsignore di Santa Croce said three prayers with the utmost devotion; and then the aforesaid deacon cried aloud, 'Orate!' Whereupon all made three genuflections, and, having taken off their mitres, prayed in the greatest silence. Then the litanies were sung by the chanters with great devotion, and when these were finished, being at the words, 'Ut Ecclesiam tuam sanctam,' the said President, that is to say Santa Croce, turned towards the prelates and the people giving them his benediction, and chanting in a loud voice, 'Ut hanc sanctam Synodum benedicere, regere et conservare digneris'; to which all the prelates replied, 'Te rogamus, audi nos.' Thereupon the Bishop of Lodeve, son of the Cardinale di San Malo, with the cope on his shoulders and the mitre on his head, ascended the pulpit, and published four decrees passed at the first session of the Council. The first of

V.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

Our last letter to your Lordships was of yesterday, and we gave you therein full account of everything that had occurred. This morning the third session of the Council was held, with the usual ceremonies and sermons. After that two of the cardinals and four of the bishops were named as Commissioners of the Council; and without letters from them, or at least signed by two thirds of them, no prelate could leave the Council. And then it was announced that after the ceremonies of to-day's session every one was free to leave, at their convenience; with the obligation, however, to be on the 10th of next month at

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these declared that the holy Council of Pisa, by the reasons alleged in the letters of convocation, was legitimately convoked and convened, and that the city of Pisa was deemed proper for the meeting of the said Council, unless some new impediments should occur that would necessitate the transfer of the Council to some other locality. The second decree declared all the interdicts, censures, and deprivations of office that have been or may be pronounced by Pope Julius II. against the said Council, its adherents and supporters, to be of no validity whatsoever; and as they are in fact, so they are declared, absolutely null, and are not to be obeyed in any way by any one. The third decree declares that all who had been summoned must appear, and if they do not make their appearance the sacred Council will proceed, as by right, without them in the prosecution of its object; and severe pains and penalties were fulminated against all who by any means attempt to interpose any obstacle, or in any way do any injury or damage to any adherent or supporter of the present Council. And it further declares the Council convoked by Pope Julius II. to be null by prevention, by the want of security in the place where it is to convene, and by the sins by which he has scandalized the Church of God; and which, being all chargeable to the head of the Church, deprive him of the right to convoke a Council. The fourth decree appoints officers of the sacred Council; namely, Monsignore di Santa Croce, President, although he has declared that he accepts the office only for one month; Monseigneur de Lautrec as guardian; and four prothonotaries, in allusion to the four Evangelists, whose duty it is to revise and correct all writings that may be made during the continuance of the Council; and besides these a number of minor officials. After this the Abate Zaccaria with cope and mitre went to ask, first the most reverend cardinals, and then each prelate, one after the other, whether the decrees that had just been read had their approbation. And although all had replied in the affirmative, he nevertheless returned to the altar and repeated the question, saying in a loud voice, 'Placet?' All replied, 'Ita nobis placet.'

"Messer Ambrogio, whom we have already mentioned to your Lordships as Procurator of his Imperial Majesty, has asked that an authentic minute shall be made of all these acts, and has indicated the next session of the Council to be on Friday next at the third hour.

"Yesterday morning, November 7, the most reverend cardinals and the other prelates held the second session in the cathedral. Mass was chanted by the

Milan, where, on the 13th, the day of Santa Lucia, the fourth session of the Council was to be held in the cathedral; and that in the interim they were to ask for a safe-conduct from the Pope, so as to enable them to send an ambassador to his Holiness to arrange for the transfer of the Council to some neutral place that would offer security to both parties.

This is the sum and substance of what was done this morning. At the twentieth hour a general meeting is to be held at the house of the Cardinale di Santa Croce; and this morning they have ordered Rosso to notify the Rectors to be there, so as to take leave of them. We know of nothing else that they would wish to say to them.

Rosso Ridolfi et Antonio Portinari,
Commissioners, etc.

Pisa, 12 November, 1511.

most reverend Cardinale di San Malo; and the same ceremonies were gone through as at the first session, and after mass the Abate Zaccaria chanted the Evangely, 'Homo quidam fecit cœnam magnam et invitavit multos,' etc.; and then he ascended the pulpit and delivered a sermon on the following text from St. John: 'Lux venit in mundum, et magis dilexerunt homines tenebras quam lucem.' His sermon related mainly to the reformation of the Church, and concluded with an exhortation that the most reverend cardinals and prelates ought to reform themselves before attempting to reform the Church. When he had finished, Monseigneur d'Haussun, ambassador of his Most Christian Majesty, ascended the chair, and published four decrees: —

"1st. A decree by the Council of Toledo on the profound silence to be observed in the Council, where no one is to speak except in his turn; and whoever contravenes this rule will be excommunicated for three days.

"2d. A decree which suspends all actions against the adherents of the Council, which cannot be judged except before the Council.

"3d. A decree appointing four bishops to hear the cases 'fidei et reformationis Ecclesiæ, et ad examinandos testes, et ad referendum sacro Concilio,' which would then proceed to the final sentence.

"4th. A decree appointing sundry officials, such as scrutators of votes, and messengers to announce and to summon."

The third session of the Council was held, not on the 14th, but on the 12th; as may be seen from the following letter of the Commissioners. After this session the prelates prepared for leaving Pisa, where they had fallen into great disrepute with the people, and where they had been tolerated with no good will by the Florentines.

COMMISSION FOR RAISING TROOPS.

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LETTERS PATENT.

WE, NINE OF THE ORDINANCE AND FLORENTINE MILITIA,*

Make known to all who may see these our letters patent, that the bearer of the same is Niccolo Machiavelli, son of Messer Bernardo Machiavelli, Secretary of our Illustrious Signori, and who is sent by us into the province of Romagna to select and enroll men capable of bearing arms, to serve on foot in our militia organization, under such banners as we shall assign to that province. And therefore we command all our subjects in the said province of Romagna to render him all obedience; and you Rectors and officials are to give him all the aid and support he may need in selecting and enrolling these men.

DAT. IN PALATIO FLORENTINO, 2 December, 1511.

LETTER.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

To-day I have given the advance to one hundred new men to serve in the cavalry, and have distributed them under the same banners; namely, Val d' Arno, Val di Chiana, and Casentino. I found the two hundred infantry of the first levy in the best order; and these new ones will be fully equipped during this month, after which your Lordships can employ these three hundred cavalry wherever you may wish. I leave here to-day for Val di Bagno, to execute the order of the Nine, and commend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

BIBBIENA, 5 December, 1511. *Secret.*

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* The Nine of Ordinance was a magistracy instituted when the national militia was established, in which Machiavelli had taken so prominent a part.

COMMISSIONS TO PISA

AND OTHER PLACES WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE FLORENTINE DOMINION.

LETTER I.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

I arrived here yesterday evening, having written to your Lordships from Poggibonsi that I would do so. I found here your Lordships' letters in which you inform me that you would send me the money to-morrow; which is very necessary, so that the citadel may not remain bare. I had an interview this morning with the constables of the citadel, together with the captain; and after much discussion we have agreed to retain of their old companies some eighty men, all of which have served a considerable time in the wars of Pisa; they are reliable and of good quality. To fill up their number I have sent to Pescia for forty men; and to raise these I have sent them forty ducats out of the money which I had with me from the horses. They will be here to-morrow evening, and by day after to-morrow I believe I shall have everything organized. Your Lordships may perhaps think that I have allowed too many of the old men to remain; but I thought it necessary, first because it seemed to me cruel to discharge these men who have served so long; and then the constables declared that they should not know what to say or do without this half of their old companies. And furthermore I believe that, when one commits a place of so much importance as this to the charge of any one, it is advisable to keep him as far as possible satisfied, so as to afford him, in any event, as little ground as possible for excuse.

But let it suffice your Lordships, that with the old and the new men a good garrison will be organized, and that you will not be defrauded; for I shall order that the pay shall always be made according to the old list, and that you shall have a duplicate of it; and that they shall neither diminish nor increase the number without the express order of your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself.

Pisa, 7 May, 1512.

P. S. — The money ordered will be enough for the number of men decided upon, and will rather exceed what is required.

Servitor
Niccolo Machiavelli,
Secret.

LETTER II.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

From your Lordships' letter of yesterday I note again your wishes respecting the garrison of the new citadel of Pisa, and of the gates. Your Lordships had already told me verbally of this, and wishing to be in a measure prepared when your instructions should come to hand, I have enlisted fifty men in the vicariate of San Miniato, and fifty in that of Pescia. These men will make good soldiers, and are satisfied to be paid for forty-five days; but it will be necessary that the Chamberlain of Pisa should pay them, and that they shall not have to look to Florence for their money, as in that case the forty-five days would probably become fifty, and some fair day the citadel would be left without a soldier; it is necessary, therefore, to think of this and provide for it.

I am now here at Fucecchio and have finished to-day all I had to do in this vicariate, and should have gone to-morrow to Pisa to carry out your Lordships' instructions if you had sent me the money to pay these new troops. But as you have not sent it, my going to Pisa would do harm rather than good; for I should not be able to say anything until the money arrived, and thus my time would be lost. And were I to make this fact known without being prepared to put other men in their place, the posts would be left without any garrison. I shall therefore go to-morrow to Pescia, and remain three or four days in that vicariate, where your Lordships will please send me the money for raising troops there, and to pay the others; and I shall then go to execute the orders you have given me. But as your Lordships have told me in your verbal instructions that, if amongst the thirty old troops that are to remain there be any that deserved less pay than Daccio and Gianetto, and yet more than ordinary men, I should give them thirty lire; and as you do not refer to this in your letter, I know not whether you may not have changed your mind, and therefore I beg you kindly to repeat your instructions upon that point.

I have nothing further to say other than to recommend myself to your Lordships.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,
FUCECCHIO, 29 May, 1512. *Secret.*

LETTER III.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I came to Sienna[*] in accordance with your Lordships' instructions, but could not obtain an audience from the Balia before Friday morning, when I communicated to them all that your Lordships had charged me with; after which I thought it proper to go and see Borghese.[†] I was most kindly received by all, who showed that this demonstration towards them by your Lordships was most grateful to them. Borghese in particular told me that your Lordships might count upon the republic of Sienna as upon one of your own cities; and that they wished in all respects to share the fortunes of your republic; and he thanked your Lordships infinitely for the kind interest you had taken in him. The Cardinal,[‡] according to what I hear, will not be in Sienna before next Wednesday, and as you have not told me, I do not think I shall stay here for any other purpose except what your Lordships have specially charged me with.

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[*] Machiavelli was sent to Sienna to condole with the Signoria of that republic on the death of Pandolfo Petrucci, which occurred at San Quirico on the 21st of May, on his return from the baths of San Filippo. Tizio, in his manuscript history of Sienna, speaking of this mission of Machiavelli to Sienna, says: "Die "interea quarta anni 1512, Niccolo Machiavellus orator a Florentinis Senam "destinatus est ad condolendam Pandulphi mortem, obtulit quidquid per Floren-"tinos agi poterat."

[†] Borghese Petrucci, oldest son of Pandolfo, succeeded his father in authority.

[‡] Alfonso, brother of Borghese.

The city of Sienna is very tranquil, and the only thing that agitates it is the murder of the Bargello some days since under the very eyes of Borghese; the murderers being all his relations and friends. To leave this murder unpunished would seem to allow too much authority to Borghese; whilst to avenge it might give rise to disturbances. I have conversed with some of the first citizens, who tell me that so long as they had your Lordships' friendship there would be no disturbances in their city; and being assured of that, you could depend upon their good will. These persons also told me that they would desire your Lordships to write to the Rectors nearest to Sienna, if they heard of any gathering of their banished or any other persons, to prohibit the same, and to advise your Lordships of it. I promised to mention this to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself.

I am now here in Poggibonsi, but shall be at Pisa to-morrow evening. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

POGGIBONSI, 5 June, 1512. *Secret.*

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LETTER IV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Day before yesterday your courier Domenico arrived with the money to pay the garrisons of the citadel and gates. They were all paid yesterday, in such manner as I shall report verbally and in detail to your Lordships on my return to Florence, which will be in six or eight days after I shall have done what the Illustrious Nine have instructed me to do in relation to the organization of the cavalry. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

PISA, 10 June, 1512. *Secret.*

LETTERS PATENT.

WE, THE TEN OF LIBERTY AND BALIA OF THE FLORENTINE REPUBLIC, ETC.,

Make known to all who may see these letters patent that the bearer thereof is Niccolo Machiavelli, son of Messer Bernardo, our citizen and Secretary, whom we send as our Commissioner for the whole of the Val di Chiana to execute the orders we have given him.

And to that effect we command all of you Condottieri of men-at-arms, and whoever is in command of the light cavalry of the Ordinance, that you render obedience to the said Niccolo in all he may direct you to do, the same as you would to our magistracy, if they were themselves to give you orders.

And to you, Commissioners, Rectors, officials, and subjects of ours, in whatever place of the said province you may be established, we command to give him all aid and support in all that he may ask of you; for it will be with our consent, and by our order, if you attach any value to the satisfaction of our magistrature.

MARCELLO VIRGILIO.

EX PALATIO FLORENTINO, 23 June, 1512.

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LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNORI, ETC. :—

By our last of the 25th, we informed your Lordships what we had learned and ordered up to the present. It seemed to us proper by every consideration, and more especially on account of those persons here who claim to be friendly to us, and most of all on account of those of the country who were greatly afraid lest they should in some way be injured, to send for Aurelio da Castello with 300 of his infantry, who came very promptly with a portion of his troop. During the night some 600 more came, although not ordered by us. Nevertheless, I judge their coming was very opportune, because, first, whoever was disposed to make trouble has seen that it would be a difficult matter; and those who wish to live quietly have taken fresh courage, seeing that your Lordships were not disposed to abandon them.

The coming of Niccolo Machiavelli was also most opportune, and immediately upon his arrival I deemed it proper for him to speak to the Priors, and these wanted the council to be present. As you may well imagine, Machiavelli exhorted them with great wisdom, and assured them, with most excellent and efficient reasons, that they had nothing to fear, either on this occasion or under more difficult circumstances, inasmuch as your Lordships had such an affection for them that you would never abandon them; to which he added other good words, etc., etc. So that, thanks to these two circumstances, everything seems settled for the present; and, with a view not to incur too much expense, we have sent back all the troops, retaining only about 150 of the best. Of these we send 50 this morning to Valiano, where there is still the company of Malatesta; and where some intrenchments are to be thrown up, as I stated in a previous letter. We have given ten barili * to each chief of a banner and captain of a squadron that we have kept; and to those whom we have sent back, we have given each one barile; although both Machiavelli and the Count thought I ought to keep more of them. But we held to this because I did not want to occasion any greater expense, and because I thought the number kept were sufficient for the present. Should, however, your Lordships think differently, you will please advise me of your wishes in the matter.

The Papal troops that were at Pienza and at the Val d' Orchia started yesterday morning and came to Torrita, Asinalunga and Rigomagno, and Lucignano, where they intend to stop to-day. They are in all 238 horse, having been counted by Ricafolo, captain of the Count's light-horse. At an early hour we sent this officer off with a squad of 25 horse, and he has been close at the enemy's heels until they were past, so that they should not debauch our troops, as they had done in the Siennese territory; and thus they dared not halt on our territory. Subsequently, the Signor Count also went off with 25 men-at-arms, to take up his quarters on the frontier, where the Signor Giovanni Corrado came to meet him; and, as I am

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* *Barile,* a piece of money so called formerly in consequence of its being levied as a tax on each barrel of wine.

informed, they had a long conference together. But it seems to me, and to the Signor Count likewise, that he did not get the whole truth from Corrado respecting the Pope's intentions, and as to what he was about to do. But he urged the Count to make terms with his Holiness; to which the Count replied in suitable manner, and afterwards requested me to write to your Lordships about it, and ask you kindly to advise him what to do in the matter, as he would ten times rather lose his state than to take such a step without your approval. In truth, the Signor Count manifests the greatest affection for our republic, both in words and acts, and regards neither trouble nor expense to render us service.

The troops that were at Orvieto went yesterday evening to Ponte a Centino, and up to this morning we have no information whether they have left there or not; we believe they have, but shall know definitely in a few hours. It is only the company of the Signor Julio, and consists of 250 horse. Since then we learn that at this moment there are at Acquapendente Piero and Antonio Santa Croce, and Orsino da Mugnano, with some 200 horse more. The Count Alessandro da Marzano with only four cavaliers arrived yesterday evening at Orvieto, and had a conference with the Pope's commissioner. It is supposed that he will advance with his company, which has remained behind, and consists of 25 men-at-arms; the same with regard to the Conte dell' Anguillara, who has 60 men-at-arms.

This is all I have learned up to the present moment. These captains have said that they sent two days ago to your Lordships for a free passage; but they have said to some persons in great secrecy that they have come for the purpose of carrying into effect what I wrote to your Lordships in my last.

Niccolo Machiavelli left here yesterday morning for Valiano to inspect the intrenchments there; and after that he is to go to Monte San Savino to establish a point of defence between there and Fojano, as I stated in my former letter.

Here we are diligently engaged in establishing a good guard, and shall be very vigilant; and we have no apprehensions but what, with the provisions made, and the good judgment and activity of the Signor Count, we shall be safe from all harm. Should we hear differently, we shall immediately notify your Lordships, to whom I do not cease to recommend myself. *Nec plura.*

MONTEPULCIANO, 27 June, 1512.

P. S. — At this moment, it being near the tenth hour, I receive your Lordships' letter of the 25th, to which we have no further reply to make beyond what I have said above. I am glad to learn that they have sent to ask free passage, and hope your Lordships have granted that request. At the risk of seeming presumptuous, I would humbly suggest that they should be obliged to take another route from that through the Mugello, so as to deprive them of all opportunity of doing mischief. And if I speak too openly, it is my love and affection for my country that makes me do so, and I trust your Lordships will pardon it.

IO. BATTISTA DI NOBILE,
Podesta and Captain.

LETTER VI.*

MAGNIFICENT AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS SIGNORI: —

At this moment, it being the eighteenth hour, Niccolo Machiavelli has left for Firenzuola; he has arranged for the money to pay all the troops of this valley and those of Marradi, with instructions to move them all in the least possible time to Firenzuola. Notice of this has been given to Pier Francesco Tosinghi at Barberino, on the supposition that he is there; of all this you will be informed by Machiavelli, in his letter to your Lordships.

Since my last, I have nothing to communicate, unless I were to repeat the same things. The bearer of this, who was yesterday at Bologna, will give you a full verbal report. Two notices in writing will be enclosed with this. *Nec alia.*

FRANCESCO ZATI,
Vicar and Commissioner.

SCARPERIA, 21 August, 1512.

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* This and the other letters that follow are relative to the measures taken by the republic to oppose the Spaniards, who were advancing for the purpose of changing the government of Florence, and to re-establish the Medici there, as in fact was afterwards done.

LETTER VII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

This morning at the fourteenth hour I wrote to your Lordships all that I had learned in relation to matters here. Since then Lamberto Cambi arrived, whom I informed of all my proceedings and designs; and as he is writing at length to your Lordships, I have nothing further to report about matters here.

By the hands of the courier Cecotto I have received fifteen hundred ducats, according to what Quaratesi writes me, for I have not counted them myself. To-morrow we shall pay the troops, giving to each one third pay; and after that I shall return to Florence, so that I may serve your Lordships in some other way.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

Firenzuola, 22 August, 1512.

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LETTER VIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

This evening at half-past one of the night we arrived here, by the grace of God, safe and sound. Upon asking his Lordship the Commissioner and N. Machiavelli in what condition and place the Spanish army and his Lordship the Viceroy might be found, they replied that they had received various information, but had reported all fully to your Lordships, as they showed me by the registers. I will not, therefore, repeat all the details of the reports I have had, but shall confine myself to giving you the substance of what I have gathered from them; namely, that if they received soon from your Lordships an order to collect as large a force of infantry and cavalry as could be got together for the purpose of making a decided stand, they could readily do it; although they might not be able to prevent the enemy's passage. Nevertheless, you would be able with the troops which Machiavelli will take from here, to the number of more than two thousand choice men, to unite with that force of infantry and cavalry raised for the purpose of making a stand. And assuming that everything remains quiet in your city, as we confidently believe that it will, your Lordships may hope that matters may result successfully, and according to your desire. And may God in his grace cause it to turn out so.

To-morrow morning I shall, God willing, leave in time to go to Lojano. This route is not considered free from danger, on account of the troops from Sassatello, and other Italians, who are on this route to join the Spanish forces in the direction of Bruscoli. I shall make every effort to obtain from his Lordship the Commissioner, and from Niccolo Machiavelli, an escort that will go in advance to examine the road and see whether it is obstructed or not so far as it leads to that place, where I hope to obtain positive information as to the whereabouts of the Viceroy. So soon as I have ascertained this, I shall at once seek an interview with him, and, with all the security which his Lordship can procure for me, make a beginning at the execution of the commission with which your Lordships have intrusted me.

May God in his grace grant us a favorable issue! *Bene atque feliciter vestræ valeant Dominationes.*

Servitor

BALTHASAR CARDUCCI,

FIRENZUOLA, 22 August, 1512. *Orator Florentinus.*[*]

LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

At this moment, it being the fourteenth hour and a half, a letter has been received from Niccolo Machiavelli, which is sent herewith enclosed. In relation to what he says of Alessandro del Nero, you may take it for certain that full information has been received. The same with regard to the artillery ; and I have ascertained, by persons whom I have sent for the purpose, that all that is contained in his letter is correct. But it seems to me that matters move a little more slowly than what they pretend ; so that, if you hasten, you may yet retain them on the other side of the state; although you will hear the truth more fully from Francesco Tosinghi.

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[*] Balthasar Carducci was one of the persons sent to the Viceroy of Naples Generalissimo of the Spanish forces, for the purpose of negotiating a peace.

This morning, seeing that the men of this place complain that they are unprovided with any means of defence, I had them all called together, and exhorted them to guard their own village. Should they therefore apply to your Lordships for some artillery and ammunition for the defence of this place, I beg your Lordships to let them have it. And moreover I have offered myself, as is in fact my duty, to share their fate with them. I recommend myself to your Lordships, and may God guard you! *Nec alia.*

Francesco Zati,
Scarperia, 22 August, 1512. *Vicar and Commissioner.*

LETTER X.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My last letter to your Lordships was written yesterday evening; I therein told you all I had heard of the enemy up to that time; and that not a single man remains here. Since then, two of your Lordships' letters of yesterday have been received; one at the twentieth hour, and the other at night. In the latter, you commission me to send and have the roads cut over which the enemy has to pass. But your Lordships must know that it would be impossible to have this done, or to have any other order executed; for, as I have already said above, there is not a single man left here whom I could send from one place to another, and to-night even we had to do without escorts, and with no protection but what nature gave us; and therefore it is impossible for us to make any provision for defence, and the enemy has it in his power to scour the country wherever he pleases. This place is entirely abandoned, and, according to what I hear, the Podesta and the customs officer intend to leave here. But even if we had the men to do the work, it would be of no use to cut the passes; for the mountain on this side is so open, that artillery could easily pass over it at this season; and, furthermore, the enemy is in such force here, that the inhabitants cannot go where their business calls them. In fact, those who have their property and dwellings on the mountain are all flying from here. I am informed that at Bruscoli, which is but a few miles from here, some hundred and fifty Spanish horse are quartered, who go about everywhere robbing, and have captured some of the men of Bruscoli. It is necessary, therefore, to think of other measures. I must govern myself according to the information I receive from hour to hour.

To-night there came here three men, sent by the communes of Ronta and Pulciano, to inform me that there was on the borders of Marradi a large body of infantry under the command of Vicenzio di Naldo of Berzighella, who purposed to pass from there by the Marradi road. These men asked me for a supply of artillery and munitions, showing me that they were admirably disposed towards your Lordships; but they had been robbed of everything, and were unable to offer any resistance to the enemy. I advised them to be of good cheer, and told them that I would write to your Lordships. I could not do otherwise, and now give you notice of it. Yesterday I wrote to Machiavelli at Firenzuola, urging him to gather a strong body of infantry at Firenzuola and at the Stale, so as to make the enemy less confident in their advance. But I have no reply from him; I had, however, to-night a letter from Lamberto Cambi of that place, who does not tell me either whether Machiavelli is there, or whether the infantry that was there had left, in which case it would be in the power of a few of the enemy's horse to scour the whole country. But if there were a good body of troops there, then the enemy would be obliged to have some respect for them.

The said Lamberto informs me in his letter of the substance of two messages which he had received from Machiavelli respecting the enemy; and so that your Lordships may also be fully informed on the subject, I send you the said letter herewith enclosed. *Bene valete.*

Piero Francesco de Tosinghi,
Commiss. General.

Barberino Mugellana, 23 August, 1512.

LETTER XI.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

Yesterday evening at the twenty-third hour I wrote to your Lordships all that I had been able to gather from all sides respecting the enemy. Since then two of our men returned, to-night, and report matters to be unchanged, and that the enemy has not advanced any farther. They may, however, change their mind and make an advance ; but your Lordships shall be informed from hour to hour of whatever news I hear.

This morning I examined the place, and afterwards went to the palace and ordered everything that can possibly be done for the present. His Lordship the Vicar and Niccolo Machiavelli and myself are in perfect harmony as to what is necessary to be done, and in providing for it. We assembled a portion of the infantry this morning, and gave to each man a ducat ; and we are now calling the remainder together for the same purpose. We do not as yet know the precise number, but we agree in estimating it to be over a thousand ; so soon as they are all together, we will inform your Lordships.

The ambassador, Messer Baldassare, left this morning at an early hour. In accordance with your Lordships' orders, we provided him with an escort, so that he may travel with more security.

If we could have had for the defence of this place some three or four more artillerists, we should have been very glad ; nevertheless, we are of good cheer and consider ourselves quite safe. May it please our Lord God that it prove so in reality! I have nothing more to say except to recommend myself to the good graces of your Lordships, and may the Almighty bestow happiness on you!

Lamberto di Cambi,
Commissioner.

Firenzuola, 23 August, 1512.

MISSION TO THE CHAPTER OF THE MINORITE BROTHERS AT CARPI.*

INSTRUCTIONS OF THE EIGHT OF PRACTICE.

DELIBERATED, THE 11TH OF MAY, 1521.

NICCOLO, — You will proceed to Carpi, and manage to be there the whole of Thursday, which you must not miss. Immediately on your arrival you will present yourself before his Reverence the Father-General of the Order of the Minorite Brothers, and his assistants, who are holding their general chapter in that place, and present to them our letters of credence. After that you will say to their Reverences on our part, that they must be well aware that our republic ever has been, is, and always will be well disposed towards all pious and ecclesiastical establishments, as is proved by the number of hospitals, monasteries, and convents founded by our ancestors; and that nothing has conduced more to these pious works than the edifying example of the habits and doctrines of these religious bodies, whose conduct moved their souls to exalt and support them. And you will add, that amongst those who have been special objects on the part of our republic, and have received most benefits at our hands, are the brothers of their order, because their honesty and their exemplary lives deserved it. Unfortunately, it is true that for some time past it has seemed, and still seems, to our best and most pious citizens, that there has manifested itself amongst the brothers a lack of that spirit of sanctity which formerly put them in such good odor; and that in consequence the laymen have relaxed their charitable zeal, which made them formerly shower benefits upon the brotherhood. And in seeking for the cause we have readily found that it arises from the relaxation of discipline that has taken place in their convents. And in trying to find a remedy for this, we learn that it is impossible for this order to recover its ancient reputation, unless they form a separate and distinct organization for our Florentine dominion. In adopting that course the brothers would more easily know and correct each other, and fear more to err. Fully persuaded that there is no other course to be taken, we wish you to urge and beg these reverend fathers to do our republic the favor to constitute themselves a distinct organization for the Florentine dominion, and separate from the rest of Tuscany.

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* After eight years of strictly private life Machiavelli reappeared in the public service through the efforts of the Cardinale Giulio de' Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., and was sent by the Magistracy of the Eight of Practice as Nuncio or Ambassador to the Chapter of the Minorite Brothers, which was held at Carpi in 1521. The object of this mission was to induce this brotherhood to form a separate and distinct organization for the Florentine dominion, it being desired by these friars themselves, and especially by a certain Brother Hilarion of that order, who had the confidence of the above-named Cardinale de' Medici, and was mainly instrumental in inducing him to have this mission decided upon. Machiavelli remained but a few days at Carpi, where he also received a commission from the Consuls of the Wool Guild to procure a good preacher for the Metropolitan Church of Florence for the next Lent.

If they do this, and we believe they will not hesitate, they will be doing an act that will be most agreeable to our entire city, which by former as well as by recent services rendered to their religion deserves to obtain what she so much desires. And they will be the cause of reviving in the convents which they possess in our dominion the ancient zeal, and in our city the charity of former days. They will also remove the causes of those scandals that are likely to break out if this favor is not conceded to us. You will endeavor, therefore, by all the means in your power, to persuade the reverend fathers that such is our great desire.

You will furthermore present to them the letters of the most illustrious and most reverend Legate, the Cardinale de' Medici, and beg them on his behalf to render us this service, as his most reverend Lordship has verbally commissioned you to do. Nor can we believe that our prayers, the love of religion, and the authority of Monsignore the most reverend Legate will fail to move them. But if with all this you do not obtain the desired result, then you will politely signify to the reverend fathers that we are resolved not to give up our project; nor do we believe that Monsignore the most reverend Legate will cease to support us, until in one way or another we accomplish our desire.

Datum FLORENTIÆ in loco Residentiæ sub die 11 Maii 1521.

Octo Viri Practicæ Civitatis Florentiæ.
NICCOLO MICHELOTTO.

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OTHER INSTRUCTIONS BY FATHER HILARION.

Inprimis, you will present yourself to me at Carpi, and I will make known to you those brothers to whom it is important you should speak; and you must endeavor to be at Carpi during the 16th, at least before vespers.

The letter to Brother Francesco da Potenza should be presented as soon as possible; you will explain to him on the part of the most illustrious and most reverend Legate, that his reverend Lordship desires that our present organization should be divided, for the reasons given below; and as his Lordship has heard that this brother is opposed to such a division, you will endeavor to persuade him to change his mind and favor the measure. For his Lordship is certain that, if Brother Francesco will favor it, success will be the result; whilst the opposite course would be the reverse of agreeable to his most reverend Lordship, who will not disappoint either the citizens or the brothers.

You will have to add, that his most reverend Lordship anticipated that he would be opposed to the Florentine brothers, and that, if this were really the case, it would be agreeable to him that in all reasonable matters he should be the friend of his friends. In fine, you will try to convince him with those persuasive words that are so natural to you.

In the letters of the Signoria and the Cardinal to the council of the assistants, you are charged to beg them, in their name, to consent that a separate organization be formed by the brothers that are in the Florentine dominion. The reason of this is, that for some time past it is reported that some of the brothers stray very far from the exemplary and edifying life to which their rules oblige them. And as they are informed that these disorders arise from a lack of discipline, they judge, together with all the other respectable people, that this will be the only seasonable remedy; and you will use the following arguments to persuade them: —

1. Because they desire the brothers to be in good, and not in bad odor, — as they have been until now.

2. Because this measure is desired by many citizens, whom their Lordships wish to satisfy.

3. Because they know that, if this measure is not adopted, it would give rise to inconveniences, of which they do not wish to hear under any circumstances, but which they desire to provide against.

4. Because they know that the brothers of their dominion, especially the good men, claim this measure as necessary for their reformation, which they cannot and will not neglect.

5. Because their Lordships desire this measure to be adopted in the customary way of proceeding by the brotherhood, and influenced by their love for their religion; and they do not wish to think of any other means.

With the above arguments, excepting the last, you may urge the measure in the name of the most reverend Cardinal; persuading the fraternity on behalf of his most reverend Lordship to satisfy the Illustrious Signoria and the citizens. You can add to your reply that the most reverend Legate *viva voce oraculi* has twice tried within a few days to persuade the Vicar of the order, who wanted to refer the matter to the general chapter; and he now begs and exhorts their fraternity to consent. That he deems it expedient, for the purpose of removing all inconvenience, that they should do it; and that they ought to think well, that if they do not do it his most reverend Lordship has fully done his duty; and that, if at some time hereafter the citizens wished to adopt some other expedient, his most reverend Lordship would not fail his citizens nor his brothers. All these things you must arrange in such manner and with such words as may seem most suitable.

TO THE MOST REVEREND AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS CARDINALE GIULIO DE' MEDICI.

MOST REVEREND FATHER: —

As these friars did not begin their chapter until Saturday, I could not execute my commission sooner. On that day they named for their Minister-General the Soncino, who had previously been their Vicar-General. On the Sunday following, they appointed twelve Assessors, who were so called this time because the brothers from across the mountains did not want that, according to the old custom of the Italians, they should create Diffinitori, with authority to determine and define questions of religion. By this change these Assessors are elected, and these together with the Minister-General have authority to hear and examine matters, and then to report them to the chapter, which body then has power to terminate them.

I therefore presented myself yesterday morning before the Minister and the Italian Assessor. I handed them my letters, and explained to them my commission in such manner and with such remarks as I thought best calculated to persuade them to the desired course of action; and I neglected no argument which your most reverend Lordship suggested to me verbally at my departure, and which were subsequently recalled to me by Brother Hilarion. Thereupon, the reverend fathers held a long consultation amongst themselves, and then had me called in and expressed to me first the great obligations which they owed to our republic, to your illustrious house, and finally to your most reverend Lordship; that they wanted not only in thought, but in fact, to do what would be most agreeable to all; and that they knew full well that the motives of the Magistracy of the Eight and the desires of your most reverend Lordship were good, and inspired by the most just and most reasonable considerations. But what was asked of them was in itself of such importance as no other question that the order had been called upon to treat for two hundred years; and therefore it was necessary to give it the most careful examination, together with the advice and opinion of the other fathers of the chapter, as they had no authority to act without them. That they would endeavor before the dissolution of the chapter to arrive at some definite conclusion, that would be satisfactory to the illustrious

Magistracy of the Eight, as well as to your most reverend Lordship. But as the question was a knotty and difficult one, and could not be so readily disposed of, and at the same time to prove their good disposition to the illustrious Signori of the Eight and to your most reverend Lordship, and so that I should not be obliged to wait here several days in vain, they would write to the illustrious Signori and to your most reverend Lordship the same as they had told me, and that I could carry their reply away with me. And thus in all they said they showed on the one hand the desire they had to oblige those who had requested them, and on the other hand the importance and difficulty of the subject; alleging the same reasons which your most reverend Lordship may have heard on former occasions.

I did not fail to reply to them in the warmest manner possible, and urged them to leave these difficulties aside, and frankly to come to a definite result; telling them particularly that I had not been sent by the illustrious magistracy to dispute about this matter, which they had themselves most carefully examined and discussed, but to make known their wishes to the reverend fathers, and to beg them to satisfy the same, which could only be done by complying with their request. I said, furthermore, that I saw two points in their answer calculated to displease the illustrious Signori; the one was the prolixity of their resolution, and the other, their attempt to negotiate about it, and remit the question to the chapter. For they well knew that, when a few persons do not want to do a thing and wish to make difficulties, they remit it to the multitude. But that this point had been thought of, and provided against in such manner that not only their reverences united, but the Minister-General by himself, had authority from the Pope to conclude such a separation, without having to submit it to the chapter; and that, moreover, the briefs themselves imposed this upon them, saying, "habito prius maturo examine, et "super hoc onerando conscientias vestras." But that we must not think ill of them, as they would really do everything in their power to satisfy us. And thus, after many words on both sides, no other conclusion was reached.

Before speaking to all the fathers together, I had a special conversation with Father Potenza, and presented to him your most reverend Lordship's letter, and pressed him hard, on your part, to show himself favorable to your wishes in this matter, intimating to him dexterously that it was wisdom on the part of men to know how to give that which they could neither sell nor keep. It is impossible to evince greater warmth in desiring to favor the matter than he did, protesting that he was the slave of your most reverend Lordship, whose slightest indications were commands for him. After that I spoke with all the others, one at a time, employing more ardent and pressing language than I had done in speaking to them all in a body, as your reverend Lordship had suggested to me. All pointed out the difficulty of carrying the matter through, and the disorder that would result from it if done; but all of them protested that your most reverend Lordship should be satisfied. From the expressions used by some of them, I am inclined to believe that they will commit the matter to their Minister-General, who, accompanied by three or four of the other fathers, will come to Tuscany to discuss and settle the matter there. If this course is taken, then Brother Hilarion feels sure that it will be concluded to our satisfaction.

Having thus done all that I have reported to your most reverend Lordship, and having the letters which the reverend fathers have charged me with, Brother Hilarion thought that I had better mount and use all diligence to reach Florence on Wednesday evening in time to enable the Eight of Practice to write another letter that would reach them before the dissolution of the chapter, which is fixed for Saturday or Sunday next. That letter should say to them that the Eight are not at all satisfied with the delay of the fathers in coming to a decision, and should conclude, in few but earnest words, that no other decision would satisfy them except such as would effectually make the desired division.

I arrived this evening here in Modena with that commission and order, but find that riding in such haste does not at all agree with me, owing to my being quite indisposed. I remember, also, that by order of your most reverend Lordship I was to remain here one or two days; and therefore thought it well to write to your most reverend Lordship, and give you information upon all points, which will answer the same as my coming in person, especially as it will be there quicker, in case you should conclude to write to them again before the dissolution of the chapter.

Messer Gismondi dei Sali, business agent of the Signor Alberto, has rendered very great service in this affair, of which I wished to bear testimony to your most reverend Lordship; for in words and in acts he shows himself most devoted to your most reverend Lordship, to whom I recommend myself.

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

MISSION TO VENICE.

CREDENTIALS.

SERENISSIMO PRINCIPI ET EXCELLENTISSIMO DOMINO ANDREÆ GRITTI, DEI GRATIA DUCI VENETIARUM PATR. OBSERV.

Most Serene Prince and Most Excellent Lord: —

We send to your Serene Highness our citizen Niccolo Machiavelli, who will relate to you in our name the extortion and violence beyond all expectation, and done in contempt of what is due to the friendship existing between your illustrious republic and ours, by a man in a port and town of your most illustrious dominion, against three of our young men who were coming from Ragusa with a sum of money which they brought from the Levant as is usual.

We beg your Serene Highness to put full faith in all that our envoy will explain to you in our name. And most earnestly do we entreat you to receive his reclamation favorably, and to cause restitution to be made to our merchants of what has so violently been taken from them. This is what we hope from the integrity and consummate justice of your most illustrious Serene Highness, to whom we recommend ourselves most humbly, and whom we pray the Almighty most happily to preserve.

Consules Artis Lanæ et
Cons. Reip. Florentinæ
in Romania
Civitatis Florentiæ.

Dat. Florentiæ ex officio nostro die 19 mensis Augusti 1525.

BRIEF INSTRUCTION

TO YOU, NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, AS TO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO IN YOUR MISSION TO VENICE, BY OUR ORDER.

RESOLVED UPON BY US, 19 AUGUST, 1525.

VERY DEAR NICCOLO: —

We use but few words with you, because we know your prudence and the great experience you have so often shown in affairs of much greater difficulty than the present, and because you have fully understood our object in sending you to Venice. But so as not to fail in the responsibility which rests upon every one who sends another on a mission, we have prepared these few lines relative to what we intend you to do in our name on your mission to Venice. You will proceed then as promptly and as conveniently as you can to Venice, whither may our Lord God guide you safely. The first thing you are to do after your arrival will be to call upon the Bishop of Feltre, Papal Nuncio to that republic, for whom you have letters from Rome; and after having delivered these to him, we wish you to try, with all the skill you can command, to possess yourself of a letter that is enclosed in the letter to him. That letter is one of those which Benedetto Inghirami has written to us from Ancona, and in it he relates at length the whole affair. We had sent the letter to Rome, for the purpose of more fully elucidating the case: and at Rome they have enclosed it in the letter to the Nuncio which you are taking with you. We tell you this because that letter varies in some respects from the deposition of the witnesses, which might give umbrage and perhaps create difficulties rather than serve our cause.

After the Nuncio has read that letter, you must take it from his hands, saying that it is superfluous, as the young men who have written it are here in person, and can state their case better and with greater brevity verbally. Coming then to discuss as to what course to take, you will follow his Lordship's advice, and then you will go with his Lordship, presuming that he will want to accompany you, or alone, and present yourself before the most illustrious Doge and the Venetian lords, for whom you have a brief from his Holiness, and a letter from our Magnificent Signori, which you will present to them with the customary ceremonies. When you shall have obtained an audience and permission to speak, you will expose to their Lordships, on our behalf, the extortion and robbery beyond all expectation and what is due to the sincere friendship existing between their republic and ours, in their port and by a Venetian, upon three of our young men, who were coming from Ragusa with money brought from the Levant in the usual way. You will demand the restitution of what has been taken from them, in the strongest and most efficacious terms that you can employ, and which, with your habitual prudence, you will deem most suitable for obtaining the result we so much desire, and to get back what has been violently taken and stolen.

You will also take with you the deposition of the witnesses taken at Ancona and elsewhere, which you will use at such time and on such occasion as you may judge most to the purpose. You will also have with you two of those young men from whom the money was taken, so that you may daily make known the precise facts, and avail yourself of them on every occasion, and may boldly face any one who attempts to deny the facts.

This is all that occurs to us to tell you at this moment, and even this may be said to have been superfluous, for we feel persuaded that you fully understand our wishes, and will know better how to carry them into effect than we have told you above. We have every confidence in you and hope, as well from what we have heard, that his most illustrious Lordship the Doge, moved by his extreme sense of justice, and having heard the case, has already had the delinquent incarcerated, as by your efforts, that you will return promptly with the satisfaction which we ask.

THE CONSULS OF THE WOOL GUILD OF THE
CITY OF FLORENCE.

REPRESENTATIONS.

SERENISSIME, ETC.:—

Certain of our citizens and merchants who have lately come from Constantinople have reported an occurrence the outrageous nature of which has caused us great displeasure; and we hope that your Serene Highness in your benevolence towards us, as well as by your innate sense of justice, will be no less displeased. The following is a statement of the occurrence.

A brigantine coming from Ragusa, and having on board the aforesaid merchants with a considerable sum of money, arrived at Lesina, a port belonging to your illustrious dominion; there they found the brigantine commanded by Giovan Battista Donati, a Venetian citizen, who accompanied the Turkish ambassador. This Giovan Battista had the said merchants brought before him, and on certain iniquitous pretexts threatened them with loss of their lives, although without the least offence on their part. And after having subjected them to indignities which we should blush to repeat, he finally compelled them to ransom themselves with fifteen hundred gold ducats, which he extorted from them by the most frivolous pretexts. This outrage seems to us the greater and the more grave, as it has been inflicted upon us by a person whom we have never offended, so far as we are aware, and within the jurisdiction of those whose good will we have ever endeavored to merit by every kind of good offices. How deeply we have felt this outrage, and in what light it must be regarded by whoever hears of it, we do not think necessary to demonstrate by a lengthy discourse, well knowing the supreme wisdom and justice of your Serene Highness.

We wished to bring this occurrence to the notice of your Serene Highness by this present representation, persuaded that you will not forget what is due to our friendship, nor what is expected from your most illustrious republic, when we beg you to have some regard for a city which is so much attached to you as ours is; and to see to the indemnification of these our merchants, who, not to use a harsher expression, have not been treated as friends, and have been subjected to a villanous outrage beyond all reason. Our most dear fellow-citizen, Niccolo Machiavelli, goes for this purpose to Venice, and will, in our name and on behalf of our merchants, explain the whole affair to you by word of mouth, relating to you precisely how the occurrences took place.

We desire above all things that your Serene Highness should be convinced that you cannot at this moment do anything that would be more agreeable to us than to order the restitution to these our merchants of the money so unjustly taken from them, — a restitution required by duty, so that every one may know that this villany was perpetrated in direct contravention of your will. If the habitual equity of your Serene Highness, as well as your ancient good will towards us, accords this grace, you will do what is really worthy of you, and most agreeable to ourselves; and which we shall receive as a benefit, and if occasion should ever present itself, we shall not fail to remember it at all times. *Quæ bene valeat.*

MISSION TO THE ARMY OF THE LEAGUE, ENGAGED IN THE SIEGE OF CREMONA.*

INSTRUCTIONS

GIVEN TO MICHIAVELLI BY FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI, LIEUTENANT OF THE POPE AT THE ARMY OF THE LEAGUE.

THERE are two reasons for my sending you to Cremona; the first is, to know with the greatest possible certainty what the chances are for the success of that enterprise; and the second is, to make every effort to have the attempt abandoned, if within five or six days the city does not surrender. Therefore, besides the other efforts which you will make to inform yourself thoroughly upon the first point, you will have a letter of credence from me to the Venetian Proveditore, to whom you will communicate the first cause of your mission, begging him earnestly to tell you what he thinks of matters, and what the Duke's * opinion is; giving him to understand that he may talk as freely with you as with myself.

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* The war which desolated Italy at this time, and in which the Pope, the Venetians, and the French were leagued together against Charles V., had the most disastrous termination for the League. It forms one of the most interesting subjects of history, and was most fruitful in events; amongst which the most noteworthy are the sack of Rome, the captivity of the Pope, and the change in the government of Florence from a republic to a monarchy. The famous historian Guicciardini was commissioner of the Pope with the army, and Machiavelli had been sent to be near him by the Florentine government. The correspondence between Guicciardini, Machiavelli, and Francesco Vettori, official as well as private, gives most precious accounts of the most secret intrigues in the affairs of the time.

From the instructions of Guicciardini it would appear that Machiavelli was near him, either voluntarily, or in virtue of a commission from the Florentine government; but that that commission was anterior to that which forms the object of this mission, because the siege of Cremona, which is spoken of in these instructions, occurred in the month of August, 1526.

As to the second object, taking your cue from the answer of the Proveditore, you will ask him on my part what he thinks of doing in case the place is not taken within five or six days. You can tell him that his Holiness, and the most illustrious Signoria of Venice, as well as the captains of the army, are of the opinion that to lose more time before Cremona would be pernicious, because it involves the loss of the opportunity for taking Genoa, which is the important object of the whole enterprise; and that, so long as the army remains before Cremona, Genoa cannot be taken, as the fleet alone is insufficient to do it; and the four thousand men of the Marquis of Saluzzo are but a feeble resource, particularly now, since the Spaniards that were at Alessandria are known to have entered Genoa; moreover, we do not believe that the Marquis would attempt to go there with so small a force.

Remind him that we have brought a large force of Swiss together, and are obliged to have two thousand Grisons come. And to see so great an accumulation of troops would be regarded by us as a great loss, and would create irreparable disorder, especially with regard to the Swiss, who when together in great number indulge every day in some act of sedition. A great many of them leave, but the expenses remain the same, and rather increase every day, whilst the number of troops diminishes. Presently we shall have winter upon us; and then we shall have the Spanish reinforcements on our back, which, according to the last news, are to set sail within a day or two. If these things come to pass before we shall have taken Genoa, or driven the enemy out of Milan, then our enterprise will remain in terrible disorder. You must therefore urge his Lordship to do his utmost to have the siege raised, in case the town cannot be taken within five or six days. Should his Lordship deem it proper that you should speak to the Doge, then you will do so; but you must do it with great caution, and not let him know my opinion, nor that of the captains. Tell him merely that the Holy Father has written to me that for the above-stated reasons it seems to him that no more time should be lost; but that anyhow this resolve must

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*** Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, and Captain-General of the Venetian forces.**

be left to the wisdom of his Excellency ; that on my part, however, I thought it proper to let him know the views of his Holiness.

Of all this you will say nothing to the Doge except under advice of the Proveditore, and in such manner as not to give him cause to get vexed.

Write by post, giving the letters to the Proveditore.

MISSION TO FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI.

INSTRUCTIONS

TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI, SENT BY THE MAGISTRACY OF THE EIGHT OF PRACTICE TO MESSER FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI, LIEUTENANT OF HIS HOLINESS THE POPE.

30 November, 1526.

Whenever our city and this Magistracy have in the past sent any one of its citizens on a mission similar to the present one, they always selected a person whom they believed capable; and having orally informed him of the business and of the manner of proceeding, they did not deem it necessary to give him further particular instructions, except in so far as it was a good usage of the city to remind him of the principal points of the commission which he bore. Therefore having chosen you, Niccolo, because of your capacity and integrity, the present instructions are given you, not to serve as your rule of proceeding, but to conform to the old established usage, and so that you may always remember that your commission consists in substance of the articles given below, to wit:—First, you will proceed as promptly as possible to join Messer Francesco Guicciardini, to whom you will explain (although it would scarcely seem necessary) the confusion existing in our city from want of troops, money, and chiefs. And although our means of security are very feeble for many reasons, despite of the arrival of the Lansquenets, which is known to you as well as to Guicciardini, nevertheless we should cheerfully face fortune and defend ourselves if we knew for certain that our forces were sufficient, and that the hopes which we have placed in others would not lead us to manifest ruin. It is this thought that occupies us constantly, so that only to-day we have sent Francesco Antonio

Nori to the Count Pietro Navarra to induce him to accept the command of our troops. We shall make all possible provisions for our defence, if we can only be assured that the confederates and those who can help us do not withdraw to the rear. But as a republic, and one like ours especially, should keep several aims in view, carefully weighing each, so as to know their weakness or their strength, the uncertainty of the one and the security of the other, so as to be able to adopt the one that presents the least danger; therefore have we thought of sending you to his Lordship, as to one of our own citizens devotedly attached to his country, so that he may examine our situation, and say what he thinks of it according to his knowledge of events from day to day; and that we may know whether in his discretion they are of a character to allow us but little hope, and whether he, like ourselves, despairs of our safety. His Lordship must know that our idea is to open negotiations for some arrangement, rather than allow matters to come to such a point that it would be difficult to remedy them.

And as we intend to devolve the charge of this matter entirely upon him, after having made known to his Lordship our desire, which cannot be more earnest, you will leave him to negotiate as he deems proper. You will return from there so soon as you are well informed as to what his Lordship thinks of the plan of the war, of the conduct of the Lansquenets, of the demonstrations of the Duke of Ferrara, of the movement of the Spaniards of Milan and Pavia, and what is generally thought of them; of the hopes that can be based upon the Marquis of Saluzzo and the Venetian troops; and finally of all this tangled mass, both on the part of the confederates and our own, as well as the enemy's; leaving the commission to negotiate to Messer Francesco, assuring him that such is our intention and desire, and that we thus give him all power to treat, governing himself, however, according to circumstances.

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LETTER I.

Magnificent and Illustrious Signori, etc.: —

I arrived here to-day at an early hour, and immediately called on his Lordship the Lieutenant, and presented your Lordships' letters, and explained to him in detail the reasons of my coming. His Lordship said to me: "For the satisfaction of "your Signori I will tell you first where our troops are, as well "as those of the enemy; after that, I will tell you what is to be "feared on the part of the enemy, and to be hoped for on the "part of friends; and, lastly, what I think ought to be done in "case we have to negotiate. The Lansquenets were yesterday at Quistello, a place in the Mantuan territory this side "of the Lecchia; they have crossed the river to-day, and "have taken the road towards Rizuolo and Gonzaga, which "would indicate that they are taking the road towards Milan "to join the Spaniards. These Germans number some fifteen "or sixteen thousand, according to what we hear from various "quarters, although one of my own men has written from "Mantua that they do not number more than ten thousand. "The Spaniards of Milan are still in that city, but begin to "give indications of their intention to leave, having agreed with "the Milanese to accept thirty thousand florins and depart; "which accords with the route which the Lansquenets are "taking. The Duke of Urbino finds himself, with all the troops "he had brought with him, in the Mantuan territory, being "quartered with the Germans, and shows no sign of moving "from there, although I have several times solicited him to "leave. True, he sends one of his captains to Piacenza with "one thousand infantry, who will be there to-morrow. The "Marquis of Saluzzo is at Vaure, a little place in the Bergamasque territory, fourteen miles from Milan and sixteen from "Bergamo; he has all his troops with him, more than three "hundred Venetian men-at-arms, and about one thousand infantry. The infantry of the Signor Giovanni, about three "thousand in number, will be posted at Parma to-morrow. Besides these there are some four thousand troops there. So "that, taking them all together, the League has over twenty "thousand men in this province.

"If the Pope does not let them suffer for want of money, "and they can all be brought together, we may perhaps continue "to be safe; but if they lack the subsidies of his Holiness, the "others will become lukewarm, and we shall have much to fear. "Beyond doubt, if all these troops are kept together and are "well paid, the enemy, whether they remain quiet or advance, "will not be able to achieve any great results, without which, "from lack of money, they will not be able to maintain them-

"selves. For, remaining thus separated, and not agreeing "amongst themselves nor having confidence in each other, "little good can be expected from them. Since the enemy "has shown signs of wishing to unite, he will in my opinion "give us some days of quiet to think of peace or war; but "when once he has united all his forces it is not reasonable "to expect that he will lose any time, but will attack either "the Venetian possessions, or those of the Church, or he will "move into Tuscany. In the first two cases, you will have "time to think of your affairs. In the third, I cannot for certain promise you other assistance than the six or seven thousand troops which the Church has here; because, with my "knowledge of the Venetian character, you cannot count upon "them for anything under similar circumstances. As to the "French, I cannot say whether they will rather follow the "advice of the Venetians, or that which will remind them of "your necessities, and I will therefore express no opinion on the "subject, but shall abide events. Therefore write to your Signori all I have told you, and assure them that I shall not fail "to make every effort to unite our troops, and to solicit Venice "and Rome not to abandon us, but to do what I have said "to you above."

Respecting the negotiating of a peace here, the lieutenant said to me: "It seems a useless thing to me, and of no advantage; for any attempt to corrupt the Germans, or to make "terms with them, would not succeed, as they and the Spaniards form the same corps. Peace negotiations should therefore be carried on with those who are authorized thereto by "the Emperor, and I do not believe that the Constable de "Bourbon, or any other of the commanders on this side, is "so authorized. But I believe the Viceroy and Don Hugo, who "are on your side, have the authority; for we hear that the "Viceroy with a portion of the fleet has landed at San Stefano, "a port belonging to the republic of Sienna. Peace negotiations can therefore be initiated much better at Florence; and "I believe the Pope has already moved in the matter, which is "likely to have a good effect. In short, we see that these movements on this side will give us time to think of remedies, "either by peace or by other means, and it will be well for you "to make this known to your Signori."

This is the substance of what I have been able to learn from the Lord Lieutenant, and I deem it proper to advise you of it by these presents, so that your Lordships may understand the whole matter. I shall remain here a couple of days longer, to see whether anything special occurs, so that I may return more fully informed about the state of things here.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

P. S. — Your Lordships will have heard of the death of the Signor Giovanni, whose loss is regretted by everybody.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

MODENA, 2 December, 1526.

LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC. : —

In my letter of yesterday I reported at length what I had learned from the Lieutenant respecting affairs here, and have nothing of importance to add, but shall repeat the same very briefly, viz. : — If the enemy comes in your direction, you will be able to avail yourselves of the troops which the Church has here; these number about seven thousand infantry. But you must not count even upon all these, as a portion of them will have to be left here. Perhaps you may be able to make use of the French troops, but the Lieutenant has serious doubts upon that point. As to the Venetians, it seems pretty certain that they will want to remain at home. With regard to the commanders whom you can employ presently or with their troops, your Lordships must know that there are here but three of any importance upon whom you can rely with any degree of confidence. These are the Count Guido, Pagolo Luzzasco, commander of the Mantuan troops, and Guido Vaina; of these three your Lordships can have the one that suits you best. We have news to-day from several quarters that the Lansquenets are stationed between Guastalla and Berselli, so that they can move either upon Piacenza or Parma; and although we have no official information about this, yet it comes to us from so many quarters that we believe it.

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* This was Giovanni de' Medici, Capitano delle Bande Nere, who died on the 24th of November, 1526. He was the son of the famous Catharine Sforza and another Giovanni de' Medici.

Of the Spaniards of Milan we hear nothing further than what I wrote yesterday. The Duke of Ferrara does not stir yet; still there are two indications from which we may judge that the country is likely to be troubled. These are, first, that some months ago a truce was concluded between the inhabitants of Ferrara and those of Carpi, to the effect that the territories of each should reciprocally be respected; this truce has just expired, and the people of Carpi have declined to renew it. The other indication is, that the Duke used to keep the relays for the post that ran from Ferrara to Reggio in this place. He has now removed them, and placed them on the roads that run entirely on his own territory.

The Lieutenant, seeing that the war was being removed from here and was drawing towards Parma and Piacenza, mounted to-day at the twenty-third hour, and rode, accompanied by the Count Guido and Guido Vaina, towards Parma. I shall therefore leave here to-morrow morning, and return to Florence by short journeys, so as not to fatigue myself unnecessarily, having nothing to communicate to your Lordships beyond what I have already written. For as to peace or any other agreement that would have to be negotiated here, the Lieutenant thinks it an idle undertaking, and calculated to do harm without profiting any one. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

MODENA, 3 December, 1526.

SECOND MISSION TO FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI.

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INSTRUCTIONS TO NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI,

Resolved by the Eight of Practice, 3 February, 1527.

Niccolo, — You will proceed in all haste and by the most secure route to Messer Francesco Guicciardini, and make known to him that the letter of the 31st ultimo written to the most reverend Legate had caused us great anxiety in announcing that the enemy are massing themselves together, and that the Spaniards, as well as the Lansquenets and the Italians, are already on the road hither, first to Tuscany and then to Rome. And as we always founded the hope of our defence upon the troops of the League, we wish to know promptly from his Magnificence whether that assistance will be of a kind that will be able to give us security. We think this should be the case if the troops of the League could be here some days before the enemy, and move as soon as possible to Bologna, as from there they could strike in every direction wherever the enemy attempts an attack.

You will make Messer Francesco understand clearly that this is our desire, and that we consider our security to depend upon it; for if the troops of the League come here after the enemy, then we see infinite dangers, which Messer Francesco in his wisdom will perceive even better than we can. But by coming here before the enemy, we could even strike a blow with our own troops and then unite them with those of the League, which would render these much more secure for themselves as well as for us. You will also urge upon him to exhort the most illustrious Duke of Urbino, the Marquis of Saluzzo, and all the other confederate commanders, promptly and effectually to march before the enemy. And if his Magnificence sees any difficulties in persuading these commanders to that effect, then let him give us the result of his judgment, so that we may know on whom we may hereafter depend. Anyhow, we are convinced that with the energy and support of his Most Christian Majesty and the Venetians, as well as the good will of their commanders, we should lack nothing at a time when reason itself is with us; for our cause is common with the Most Christian King and the Venetians; and although we may perchance be the first to suffer, yet they are sure to suffer equally afterwards.

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LETTER I.

Magnificent and Illustrious Signori, etc.: —

Owing to the obstructions on the roads by the enemy I did not arrive here until this morning. I had a long interview with the Lord Lieutenant, and found that his Lordship had of his own suggestion arranged with the commanders, and especially with the Duke of Urbino, to march in all haste with the whole army into Tuscany, in case the enemy should move in that direction. He assured me that the Duke of Urbino was most warmly in favor of it, only differing as to the manner and order of doing it; for his Lordship wanted the Marquis of Saluzzo to be the first to enter Tuscany with the advance-guard, whilst the Lieutenant wanted the Duke himself to take the lead, deeming that order to offer the greatest security. And therefore he wanted me to speak to the Duke this evening, which I did in his presence, employing the best arguments I knew how to convince him of the necessity of prompt and vigorous assistance in case the enemy should move upon Florence. I referred to the great confidence which that city had in his valor and in his affection for her; and did not fail to tell all I knew of myself, and what the Lord Lieutenant had suggested to me. But the Duke remained firm in his purpose; he agreed, however, to meet me to-morrow, when we are to examine this subject pen in hand in all its bearings, and thinking of what ought to be done in connection with every movement of the enemy. I shall not, therefore, enter into any further particulars, but shall reserve myself for what may be concluded upon to-morrow, of which your Lordships shall have the most detailed account.

No news has been received to-day from Piacenza, and I have therefore nothing further to say, except that the enemy continue to occupy the same places. We do not hear that they do anything beyond gathering provisions; and from the points to which they direct them, we surmise that they are destined for Tuscany rather than elsewhere. The Lieutenant makes every effort to ascertain the enemy's movements, and your Lordships shall be most fully informed of whatever he may find out. *Quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

7 February, 1527.

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LETTER II.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships yesterday evening all that had occurred here. To-day we have the news that a portion of the Lansquenets have quitted Pontenuovo, and have gone to join the Spaniards. We do not altogether understand the object of this movement; some say that they are gone to attack Lodi, others say Cremona. We also hear from the Count Guido, who is at Piacenza, that yesterday some of the enemy's horse came almost to the walls of the city. The Count sent Paolo Luzzano and the Count Claudio Rangoni after them, who dashed upon them so furiously that they took the captains Zuccaro, Scalengo, and Grugno, three officers of considerable importance, and came very near taking the Prince of Orange also. They captured, moreover, some eighty cavaliers and one hundred infantry. And thus our people become every day more bold in assailing the enemy, who on their part seem every day to become more discouraged. It is impossible, however, that they should remain thus any length of time, and that their ill humor should not cause them to make an attack somewhere. If it be on this side, as is now generally believed, we shall be relieved of our suspicions. But if they come in the direction of

Florence, then we shall observe the order which I communicated to your Lordships yesterday evening, and which plan will most probably be in some respects improved.

We believe that the Count Guido will find out from his prisoners some of their plans, and the reason of their tardiness, and the variety of their movements. He will best be able to learn it from Scalengo, because he is said to be a special favorite of the Viceroy, and knows many of his secrets. If the said Count will get such information from him, we shall have some certainty of the state of their affairs; and if I learn anything about it, it shall be immediately communicated to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself. *Quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

Parma, 9 February, 1527.

LETTER III.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

I did not write to your Lordships yesterday, having nothing of moment to communicate, and hoping to be able to give you something positive to-day, persuaded that the Count Guido would obtain some special information from those prisoners; but as he has not written, I suppose that he did not succeed. We hear various accounts of the enemy's movements. I wrote you that the Lansquenets who were at Milan had left the town to unite with those outside; to-day we hear that they have not yet gone out, but that they are to go. We are informed that they have secretly made provision of scaling-ladders and spades. Some say that they want to make a *coup*, others that they intend to prepare for taking the place by sapping it, as they cannot assail it with artillery, as the Duke did at Cremona. This morning we have a report that ten banners of the Spaniards that were this side of the Po have recrossed the river without our knowing the reason why. This evening we learn that the enemy have furnished Pizzighettone with provisions, and employed those Spaniards as an escort. And thus we hear at every moment different accounts of their movements, which are interpreted by some that they intend coming into Tuscany, whilst others think that they will attempt some enterprise on this side; and those who in matters of this kind have the best judgment know least what to conclude. Nevertheless everybody believes this, that if the enemy could seize one of these strong places they would begin with that, for they have great need of them; and if they do not begin with that, it is because they do not believe that they would succeed. But it seems a hard thing to believe that, if they could for example take Piacenza, they would imagine that they could take Tuscany, where it is so difficult to enter, remain, and combat. God knows what they ought now to do; perhaps they do not know it themselves, for if they did they would surely have effected it, so much time having passed during which they could have formed a union of their forces. It is believed even that they are but little to be feared, if they are not aided by our own disorders; and all who have any experience in war judge that we ought to be victorious, unless either evil counsels or the lack of money cause our defeat. For our forces are so great that they should suffice to sustain the war; and we ought to be able to provide against the other two defects, the first by taking good counsel, and the other that his Holiness the Pope does not abandon us.

I have not yet left here because I wished to see which way this water is going to run; so that, if it is going to take its course towards Florence, I may return decided upon all points as to the order and character of the remedies. I shall therefore remain here some three or four days yet, and after that, with your Lordships' gracious permission, I shall return under any circumstances. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

Parma, 11 February, 1527.

LETTER IV.

Magnificent Signori, etc.:—

Since writing to your Lordships yesterday, some matters of very little importance have occurred. I deem it proper, however, to report them to you, so that your Lordships may know all that we know here. The French commanders and the Duke of Urbino resolved last night to make a cavalry raid upon the enemy, just to show him that they were still alive, and partly for the purpose of reconnoitring the country. Accordingly they started last night, and when the French arrived about daylight at Carpineto, they found an outpost of light cavalry there under command of Camillo della Staffa. They captured some sixty of his horses, and then charged upon the enemy, who were obliged to remain all day under arms. Three days ago the enemy had taken Busse, a small place some twenty miles from here; the castle of the place, however, still held for the Church. The Duke sent some infantry there at night, who made their way in through the castle, and made prisoner one Folco, a Mantuan; his company of about two hundred men were captured and put to the sword, and the place was recovered.

Monseigneur de Bourbon came yesterday to the camp of the Germans, to consult, as is supposed, respecting further operations. We have not heard yet of his having left there again, nor is it known what has been decided upon. True, the Count Guido writes, that the Marchese del Guasto sent him word to rest assured that the enemy would not move upon Piacenza, so that we are as undecided what to do, as on the first day. It seems impossible to believe that the enemy will not take some action within three or four days, and we shall govern ourselves according to their movements. And if the Duke of Urbino is disposed to do his duty, which he certainly will if it be your Lordships' pleasure, then it is believed that the enemy will find little profit in advancing. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

PARMA, 12 February, 1527.

LETTER V.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I did not write to your Lordships yesterday, as I had nothing of interest to say, nor is there anything new to-day; nevertheless, to continue my habit whilst here, I deem it proper to write you a few lines and say that the imperial army has as yet made no movement; although the Count Guido writes in a letter received this morning that the said army was to start this morning for the purpose of making an advance. It is supposed that this news is not true, for if it were we ought to know something of it by this time, it being two o'clock of the night. But if the army has not started yet, it is believed that it cannot remain still much longer, and we hear from all sides that it is to break camp shortly and move forward. In Lombardy they do not believe it possible that the enemy can take any of the places which they intend to guard, for the people of the country seem resolved to defend themselves. They have with great rapidity made all the repairs and preparations; and I believe they will resist with great obstinacy, seeing the example of Milan and the other cities, which, notwithstanding that they were given to the enemy and received by him in good faith, were nevertheless first subjected to the payment of heavy contributions, and then actually sacked. This has so filled people's minds with fear, that they will rather die than submit to similar inflictions. If the enemy comes into Tuscany, they will find the inhabitants similarly disposed, and will meet not only with the same, but even greater difficulties; for that country is not able to support the war the same as this, and the least impediment that holds them at bay may become the cause of their dispersion. This has been affirmed by certain Spaniards who were taken prisoners at Lodi by Messer Lodovico; they told him that their army was powerful and of such character that it would be an evil counsel to give to the army of the League to engage them in battle. But that there existed such a state of confusion amongst their commanders, that they did not know what to attempt with any hope of success; and that they were so poor that, if our troops were to delay action for any length of time, it would be impossible for their army to be successful in any attempt whatsoever. We shall therefore continue to watch them, and shall advise your Lordships from day to day of the enemy's movements, and of the course which we shall adopt to avoid an engagement and to follow them. The best part that we can play in this game is to govern ourselves so that this Duke will have an inducement gladly to make some effort, taking good counsel and executing it still better; otherwise we might gain nothing but dishonor and loss. I know that his Lordship the Lieutenant has written about this to Rome and here; but I did not wish to omit letting you know; and as I have told you in my previous letter, so soon as I shall see the enemy move, and it is known what road he will take, I shall return with the plans and dispositions that are regarded here as the best for the defence of our country. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor
NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

PARMA, 14 February, 1527.

LETTER VI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I reported yesterday to your Lordships all that had taken place, and write now to inform you that the Count Cajazzo came to-day in person to Borgo a San Donnino with the troops under his command. The other part of the enemy's forces has not yet moved, but it is supposed that they will start to-morrow or next day; and it is said that they will positively not stop at Piacenza or Parma, but that they purpose laying siege to Modena, or to move in the direction of Bologna and throw themselves from there upon Tuscany or Romagna. On our part we shall follow the enemy's movements, according to the plans which I communicated to your Lordships a few days since; that is to say, so that a considerable part of our forces will be in Romagna or Tuscany before the enemy, and the rest will follow him. Amongst the latter will be the Duke of Urbino, whom it has been impossible to persuade, up to the present, to form a part of the advance-guard. But what is still more unpleasant is, that he left here to-day for Casal Maggiore sick with fever and gout, which has caused us great regret. For, as I have written to your Lordships in a former letter, the general opinion is that we cannot possibly fail in this undertaking, except from want of good counsels or lack of money. We have no one who can give better advice than the Duke of Urbino, and your Lordships may imagine how much the want of it is regretted by those who wish matters to result fortunately for the League. But what is worse even is the fact that the Duke has left more indisposed in mind than in body. As to the body, we can only address ourselves to the Almighty to cure him; but as to the mind, we must look to your Lordships. At any rate, that is the opinion of every one here; and if those who are at Florence were here, they would assuredly think the same, and would not believe that the victories gained in Rome would suffice to enable us to win in Lombardy.

Your Lordships shall be promptly advised of whatever occurs, and of what is done by the enemy as well as by us, and of what ought to be done by your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

PARMA, 16 February, 1527.

P. S.—The Lord Lieutenant has directed me to write to you that the pay of the troops falls due the 23d instant, and begs you will take the necessary steps to enable us to make this payment. For should there be any default in this, it would end all uncertainty, as everything would be hopelessly lost. He has therefore urged me to remind your Lordships of it, *quæ bene valeant.*

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LETTER VII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

I have written to your Lordships so often and so differently about this Imperial army, that I am really ashamed to write you any more; nevertheless, as it is necessary that I should write, I may as well inform you of all the rumors I hear, and afterwards compare them with the events. I wrote yesterday that the enemy was hourly expected to move. To-day, being the 18th, we do not yet hear of their having made the slightest attempt. True, there are letters to-day from the Count Guido of the 16th, saying that on that day the Imperialists held a review, and that twenty thousand florins had been sent to the Lansquenets, so as to give them two florins per man, and that on Monday or Tuesday, that is to-morrow or the next day, they were actually to move; but he does not say in what direction. He declares, however, that he is prepared to follow them wherever it may be necessary, and that he would be at Modena before them if they should attempt to take that route, and that at the first halt which they made it would be seen what road they intended to take, whether to Bologna or towards Pontremoli. He says, furthermore, that your Lordships shall be fully advised both as to the route and as to the measures to be taken for the defence of Tuscany in the event of the enemy's moving in that direction. As to uniting all the forces of the League in one camp, and attempting a battle with the enemy, that was not deemed feasible, nor was much to be hoped from it.

The Count Cajazzo, as I have already written to your Lordships, is at the Borgo a San Donnino, with one thousand infantry and one hundred light-horse. The Lord Lieutenant has had some negotiations with him to induce the Count to enter the service of the Pope; the matter was concluded yesterday, so that to-morrow these troops, infantry as well as cavalry, will come over to our side, which has already added and will add still more to our credit, and diminish that of the enemy. For as everybody looks upon the Count as very prudent, they conclude that, if he had considered the affairs of the Imperialists in good condition, he would not have taken such a step.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

PARMA, 18 February, 1527.

LETTER VIII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

If your Lordships had not been kept daily informed of every occurrence here by the Lord Lieutenant in his letters to the most reverend Legate, you might wonder at not having had letters from me for several days, and might reasonably accuse me of neglect. But I deemed it superfluous to tell you the same things that the Lord Lieutenant has written and told you. Nor have I returned yet, although the enemy has moved forward, because the Lieutenant thought that before I left he would wish to see for certain what the enemy really intended doing. And truly, before they started, and even afterwards, we were not without considerable apprehensions that they would move upon Tuscany; for we had understood that they had been so urged by the Duke of Ferrara, and that in fact it had been their own plan, as they believed that country to be more easily pillaged than any other, its inhabitants being unaccustomed to the sight of an enemy's face. This opinion prevailed until yesterday, although it was supposed that, if they wished to enter Tuscany, they ought to have taken either the road by way of Pontremoli or by way of Garfagnana, as both these routes lead to the Lucchese territory, where they might have hoped to find provisions for some days; or they might either have had them brought here from a country that was devoted to them, or they might have been supplied from Ferrara; and once past, they might have made the attempt upon Tuscany, and if successful they could have followed up their victory, and failing they might have passed on to the Siennese territory.

But since they have gone from Modena towards Bologna, no reasonable man can suppose that they will come to Tuscany, because there are but four roads leading to it, namely, the Sasso, the Diritti, the Val di Lamona, and to pass the Alps of Crespino, or by Val di Montone, in which case they would have to pass the Alps of San Benedetto. Neither one of these roads is secure, for besides the ordinary difficulties of passing the mountains, all these passes lead into the Mugello, where they would die of hunger in two days, unless they should take either Pistoja or Prato; and as they cannot hope to do that, they cannot attempt to come by these passes. There remains one other route by which they could penetrate into Tuscany, and that is to enter into the Marecchia above Cesena, and come to the Borgo San Sepolcro. This road is easy, but it would be difficult for these troops to get to Cesena, as all the places in Romagna are fortified, and the country bare of provisions. Nevertheless, if the enemy take either of these routes, all measures are taken for our troops to arrive in Tuscany before them, in accordance with the plans which the Lord Lieutenant has communicated to the most reverend Legate; and they will, moreover, have the Duke of Urbino at their heels. We have news to-day that he is entirely well again, and that he has passed the Po with all the Venetian troops. If then it be true that the enemy has to encounter such difficulties in advancing, it follows that necessity will oblige them to attempt some enterprise nearer at hand, and which they could carry out at their ease, and which, if successful, would open the way for them to succeed in all the others.

Yesterday the impression prevailed that they would make an attempt upon Ravenna, and therefore we sent a detachment of six hundred troops there this morning. To-day it is feared their attack will be upon Bologna; the fact that the fortifications of Ravenna are in a bad state of repairs is calculated to decide them in favor of that place; whilst the reason for attempting Bologna would be its population, which is believed not to be all agreed to sustain a siege. We shall soon see which of the two it will be; and if the enemy comes here, the most important place for this game will be around the walls of this place. But I believe we may remain here quite safely, for there will be ten thousand troops here, the place is well fortified and supplied with all necessaries, and the inhabitants are united and well disposed to defend themselves.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 4 March, 1527.

P. S. — I wrote the above to your Lordships yesterday, but the letter was left behind, owing to the carelessness of the person who makes up the packages. The enemy has made no movement to-day, nor have they come to Castel San Giovanni as was expected; nevertheless we are to-day of a somewhat different opinion from yesterday. For if we were yesterday sure that the enemy would not come into Tuscany, but would attack this city, to-day we are quite in doubt, owing to the information we have that after all their real design is to enter Tuscany; and that they feigned first that they were coming here to Bologna, so that, having induced you to send all your forces here, and having thus, as it were, disarmed you, they might arrive before us and crush you at a single blow. The Lord Lieutenant therefore writes you not to send any troops into Romagna, and has ordered that the troops of the Signor Giovanni, if they are in a convenient place, shall come at once in this direction. Or perhaps the Signor Giovanni may go in person to Loglano, accompanied by a strong division of infantry, so that he may be able to return here in case the enemy should attack this city, or be in advance of them if they should attempt to move upon Florence. I said that perhaps this course might be taken, because the reasons which I alleged in my letter of yesterday for not believing that the enemy would not come into Tuscany unless he had first taken Bologna are so powerful in their nature that, notwithstanding the information received since, we remain still of the same opinion. But that which troubles our spirits is that a certain Betto, one of our own people, has related to us that, having been at the enemy's camp to-day, the Constable de Bourbon had told him to make known to the people of Bologna that, if they would give him free passage and provisions, and become good Imperialists, he would ask nothing else of them, and would treat them as friends; but if they would not do this, they might expect to see the army before their walls. This proposition seems to us most important, for if the enemy really takes such a course, the population of the city being very great, and seeing that they can escape such great dangers on such easy terms, it is to be feared that they would eagerly accept them. It is necessary, therefore to retain a sufficient force here to keep the population firm in their good will towards us, and to be able to show them the deceit which it is intended to practise upon them, and the ease with which they can defend themselves against it.

But to do this, troops must not be sent to Loglano, unless Bologna is first relieved; and thus what might be of advantage to Florence would injure us here, and what would benefit us here might do harm to Florence. Anyhow it is supposed that all can be provided for; because, by not sending your troops into Romagna, you will find yourselves with 5,000 men, besides the 3,000 of the Signor Giovanni, which will be sent to you under any circumstances. And as for the rest of the army, excepting the troops that are with the Duke of Urbino, they will remain here to watch the enemy, who must come either by the Sasso road or by the Diritta. And we shall be prepared to come by whatever road they do not take, and shall anyhow be at Florence before them; for we shall come without artillery, whilst they must bring theirs along with them. These are the plans that have been discussed to-day; they will adopt that which is deemed the best, of which his Lordship the Lieutenant will write most fully and distinctly to the most reverend Legate.

Iterum valete!

Bologna, 5 March, 1527.

LETTER IX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

If I had not received your Lordships' letter of the 10th instant, I might have believed either that the letters which I have written had failed to reach you, or that you had regarded them as altogether superfluous, as in truth they have been. And if, on the other hand, I have not returned, it is because the Lord Lieutenant thought it best that I should remain until the Imperialists had taken a route that would prove conclusively that they were not moving upon Tuscany. Or if they did take that route, I might charge myself with some of the measures that would have to be taken, according to the instructions which I received from your Lordships before my departure from Florence; and whilst here I have attended to some of the business confided to me by his Lordship. These are the reasons why I have not written to you more frequently, and which have prevented my return. Now, however, more for the purpose of obeying your Lordships than because it is necessary, I beg to inform you that the Imperialists are at San Giovanni, some ten miles from here, where they have been for several days, but have made no movement of any kind; and although they were tempted several times by our troops, and provoked to skirmish, yet they never budged. Their generals have attempted to negotiate with Ferrara, and we hear this morning from very reliable sources that they have actually concluded an arrangement, according to which the Duke is to furnish them 6,000 sacks of bread and flour, 200 hundred horses for their artillery, 20,000 pounds of coarse and 5,000 pounds of fine powder; and when all these things have been supplied, they are to come into Tuscany by the shortest route.

As to the army of the League there are here 10,000 infantry, 600 are at Ravenna, 4,000 at Pianora, and nearly all the corps of the Signor Giovanni; and the Count Guido has 3,000 in Modena. The greater part of the Venetian troops are with the Signor Malatesta Baglioni between Reggio and Parma; the Duke of Urbino with the remainder is on the other side of the Po, unless he has passed it within the last two days. The army of the League has placed itself in these different positions, so that the enemy shall not carry out any plan they may attempt. And it is supposed that, by holding these positions, it will be able to be in Romagna or in Tuscany before the enemy, and defend either Bologna or Modena in case they should attempt to attack either. And although until now opinions have varied much as to the enemy's intentions, yet the latest reports which I have given you above have caused great apprehensions as to Tuscany; for the large quantity of provisions that are being collected, according to the accounts from various sources, confirm these apprehensions. On the other hand, we see no movement amongst the people subject to Ferrara, which the enemy would have to traverse to go into Romagna; for common sense would at least have made them clear the road.

The Marchese del Guasto, who is sick, sent to-day to ask for a safe-conduct to enable him to go with all his family into the kingdom of Naples by way of Romagna. It does not seem reasonable that he should want to pass through a country where after his passage they would raise the cry that his troops were about to attack the country. On the other hand, the shortest road is the one of Sasso, but it is regarded by those who know the country well to be the most difficult, and the Signor Federigo da Bozzolo expresses the same opinion of it in a letter written by him to the Lord Lieutenant; and I believe that they know very well, that both on this side and towards Florence the road has been cut and fortified, so as to render it still more difficult. To come by the Alps of Crespino or San Benedetto seems to us out of all reason, so that we doubt much whether they would not have to turn back and descend into the Lucchese territory by the Garfagnana, which amongst all these difficult routes is the easiest; and once having passed it, they would find inhabitants who would furnish them supplies, but would not combat them.

The road by the Marecchia, and passing the Borgo a San Sepolcro, respecting which it seems there are some fears, is easier than that of the Garfagnana, but is much less convenient than what is believed here; and for that reason it would be easier for them to fall back three days' march, so as to enter the Lucchese territory promptly, where they would be received with open arms, instead of having to march six or eight days through the enemy's territory, where they would be obliged to fight their way through from the beginning.

There is another route which has come into notice within the past few days, respecting which, however, there are great doubts; it begins below Bologna four miles in the direction of Imola; it crosses the Iddice and brings up at Cavrenno and at Pietramala, and runs from there along the Stale to Barberino. This was the route which the Duke Valentino took when he attacked Florence in 1501, and is considered much less wild than that of the Sasso. There is a messenger here sent by the inhabitants of Firenzuola to learn what measures are to be taken in case our troops should move in that direction; the Lord Lieutenant has conferred with this person about that road, and has learned the same thing from him. True, he says that about four miles from Stale there is a place called Covigliano, where there is a bad pass that can be made even worse; and about a mile from there is another pass called Castro, which is difficult by nature, but can be made still more so; and the Lord Lieutenant has sent this person back to Firenzuola to have this done; and your Lordships can have this road reconnoitred and have similar work done.

It is believed that the enemy will require some days before he can get his provisions together, and we are therefore on the watch; and there is no lack of vigilance on the part of the most illustrious Legate and the Lord Lieutenant to watch the enemy's movements, and in any event to forestall him. This is all I have to write to your Lordships, to whom I recommend myself most humbly.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 12 March, 1527.

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LETTER X.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote yesterday at length to your Lordships, and informed you that the bad weather had prevented the enemy from breaking up. This storm commenced on Saturday night, and up to now, the twenty-fourth hour, it has rained and snowed incessantly, so that the snow lies three spans deep in every part of the city, and it still continues to snow. Thus the obstacle which we could not have opposed to the enemy's movements has been sent by the Almighty.

We have not been able to obtain any news of the enemy, for our trumpeter could not cross the river, nor could theirs come to our side, but we rather think they are faring badly; and if the Almighty had really wished to do us a service, he would have delayed this storm until after the enemy had passed the Sasso, and had got fairly into the mountains. Perhaps this weather would have overtaken them there if they had started at the time they intended; but the mutinous movements of their infantry, which at the time seemed so dangerous, caused them to delay their starting, and thus saved them from the consequences of this storm. Nevertheless, we believe that they are badly off, for they are on low ground, which was formerly boggy, and has been made habitable by cultivation and industry. We have endeavored to increase their troubles by breaking the dikes of the Samoggia, and turning the water upon them, and yesterday we sent off men for that purpose; but they had scarcely gone two or three miles, when they could get no farther, and returned here reporting that the whole country was under water. We have nevertheless attempted it again, and have written to the men at Castelfranco, and have also sent men by other routes with great promises of reward; we shall see what the result will be. We have no further news of the illness of George Frondsberg, owing to the above causes; but if fortune should change and favor us, he would die anyhow, and that would be the real beginning of our salvation and the enemy's ruin.

I would furthermore say to your Lordships, that if this trouble had come upon the enemy before he laid in his large store of provisions, he would assuredly have been ruined. But the great amount of supplies which they have gathered for their movement upon Tuscany will save them. Had they been obliged to procure their provisions from day to day, it would not have been possible for them to live. And if the Duke of Ferrara could get back a little brains into his skull, and this weather were to continue a couple of days longer, he might terminate this war in sitting down or in sleeping; every effort should therefore be made to induce him to do so.

I wrote you yesterday evening that, if you wished to profit by this trouble and inconvenience of the enemy, it would be necessary to make the most of the time which fortune gives us; for if fair weather should return, we should find ourselves where we were before, and the delay which the enemy experienced in going to Tuscany would have been injurious to us rather than advantageous. And if it be desired that we should be better prepared, then the Venetians ought to pay their troops and make their whole army join ours; otherwise, things will go badly. For it is the general opinion that if the Imperialists pass into Tuscany, even if they do not ravage the country, but merely pass through into the Siennese territory, we could never hope to be successful in this war unless we should be victorious in a battle, which it would be just as easy for us to lose. The Lord-Lieutenant received letters this morning from the Pope's Nuncio and ambassador at Venice, which could not possibly be more full of good promises or greater hopes; for they say amongst other things that the Duke affirms that the success of our enterprise is as good as assured, and that he will under any circumstances destroy the enemy's army. But the Lord Lieutenant, seeing how much these letters differ from the facts, has written them a letter of two sheets, in which he reviews all their former errors, points out how greatly their actions have differed from the words spoken at Venice, and shows them exactly what they ought to do, if they intend to speak the truth with regard to their plans as well as with regard to the Duke's hopes of victory. It is impossible to say what the result of this letter will be; still we shall have the satisfaction of having brought the matter to their notice, and it will serve to show them that we shall not be taken in by their outcries, and that fair words alone do not satisfy us.

Your Lordships must not cease to importune them, as I wrote you yesterday; and to give them no rest until their troops are actually paid and have joined ours, or until they are forced to declare that they do not mean to do it. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 18 March, 1527.

LETTER XI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

Since we have the news of the conclusion of the truce, or rather of the promise, I have not written to your Lordships, as I wanted first to see how it was received here. The Fieramosca wrote yesterday from the camp that, owing to the absence of the Marchese del Guasto from here, it was impossible to conclude anything, but that he had found Monseigneur de Bourbon well disposed; and he urgently requested the money to be sent which, according to the promises, ought to have been paid here yesterday, the amount being forty thousand ducats. He has written again to-day, as your Lordships will see from the copy which the Lord Lieutenant sends to the most reverend Legate, and which, on the whole, shows that everything goes well; but he demands that the whole sum of sixty thousand francs be sent here, so that those who were not favorably disposed to the truce might not have a hook to hang their doubts upon. Therefore, O Magnificent Signori, if ever you have had the thought of saving your country and enabling her to escape the great and imminent dangers that threaten her, then make this last effort to raise this money, so that this truce may be concluded, and the present evils and dangers averted, so as to give us time, or, to say better, put off the ruin; and so that, if the truce cannot be carried into effect, we may at least have the wherewithal to carry on the war, or, to say still better, to sustain it. For in either one case or the other it would give us time; and if ever the proverb was true that "to have time is to have life," it is in this case most decidedly so.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 23 March, 1527.

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LETTER XII.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote yesterday to your Lordships, giving account of what had taken place here since the departure of the Fieramosca. We have no later news of him, notwithstanding that yesterday already two mounted messengers have been sent to inquire after him. The reason of his silence is supposed here to be because he has experienced some difficulty with those German commanders, whom it is necessary to satisfy. He must have had a hard time of it, more so than if the Captain George Frondsberg had been present. But he has gone away to Ferrara so ill that, if he does not die soon, there will anyhow be nothing to hope or to fear of him in a little while. The continued duration of this state of things greatly displeases the Lord Lieutenant for many reasons; principally because it seems to him that the French and the Venetian troops may leave us at any moment, although he has made every effort to prevent it, and has said to the Marquis that he had no doubt but what he would always get away safely, and has promised to accompany him personally; although he showed no disposition to move without first knowing that the truce was actually resolved upon. At the same time there are letters from a Messer Rinaldo Calimberto, whom the Lieutenant keeps near the Duke of Urbino, stating that the Duke also says that he will not move his troops without first knowing the terms of the truce. They will adhere to this determination as long as they can, although they will not have to delay very long, for it is impossible that by to-morrow or next day they should not know all about it. It has been a good deal discussed here by many, whether the Imperialists will accept the truce. Some doubt it, seeing the delay in concluding it, and the more so as they are clearing the way, as though they intended to attack this city. They have made fresh requisitions for carts and pioneers; what troubles us most, however, is the fact that some three thousand Spaniards presented themselves yesterday before Castelfranco, and summoned the place by a trumpeter to surrender; being answered by gunshots, they withdrew, and then made a regular attack upon San Cesario; but seeing that they could not take it, they burned the suburbs and carried off all the cattle they could. All this looks more like war than peace, although some say that this is a common practice during the interval between war and a truce. But all this must be cleared up; and so soon as it is, your Lordships shall be informed of all particulars.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 24 March, 1527, third hour of night.

LETTER XIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

I have not written to your Lordships for two days, having been at Pianoro to review the troops. I returned here to-day, and found matters in the same condition in which I had left them; for there is as yet nothing definite from the Fieramosca, although the Lord Lieutenant has written him every day, and has with that prudence which is necessary under such circumstances urged him to bring matters to some definite conclusion. The weather has been and continues bad, so that if the Spaniards have not scoured the country during the past two days it has been solely on that account. Nevertheless, we hear that war is resolved upon; for we learn from those sources whence we have been in the habit of receiving news, that the enemy have changed their intention of coming into Tuscany by the Sasso, or by any other route equally convenient, because they are frightened by the bad roads and the weather; and that they intend coming by way of Romagna, and entering Tuscany by the Marecchia. They purpose occupying some one of the most important towns on that road, and to be able to do so the more securely, they want to arrive there before the troops of the Church in the following manner. They will make their first halt at Ponte a Reno, and in that way they hope to keep us quiet and in doubt, as they can take different routes from there and attempt different attacks. After that they will divide their forces, one portion remaining here and feigning an attack on this city, and the other part will turn below Bologna, placing itself half-way between Bologna and Imola. They believe that they can carry this plan out in security, as they believe that either division of their forces is stronger than we are all together, and that they can moreover unite their entire forces with perfect safety should it be necessary. And thus they count on being ahead of our troops, and finding the towns unprepared; and after having taken one, they think the others will have to act according to their will.

Our situation seems to me the same that it has been ever since we have been here; that is, one day we hear that one thing has been resolved upon, and the next day we hear of another plan directly the reverse; and therefore the one is as much to be believed as the one that has been told and written before; nor is there as yet any positive reason for apprehending that the truce will not be concluded. Still, it is necessary promptly to come to some conclusion either for or against it, for many reasons, and mainly to enable us here to inspire the Venetians with confidence, and settle the minds of the French troops, so that we may not find ourselves left alone to bear the burden of this war. For as the truce, if concluded, will be our safety, so, on the contrary, if it is deferred or not concluded will it be our ruin. Nor do I believe that there is any one who thinks differently. But when Heaven intends to conceal its designs, it leads men to that point that they cannot adopt any definite plan for their safety. I have nothing further to add, except to recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ feliciores sint. Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 27 March, 1527.

LETTER XIV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

I wrote to your Lordships day before yesterday. Since then we have the following respecting the truce. Messer Giovanni del Vantaggio returned yesterday evening from the Spanish camp, where he had gone with the Fieramosca, and reports confusion and differences between the captains and the troops; the latter do not want the truce, whilst the captains, and especially the Captain-General, are in favor of it. Messer Giovanni adds, that he came away from the camp partly because he did not like to remain there, and partly for the purpose of reporting the condition of things there. This evening, after five o'clock, news came that the enemy had broken up and were marching to Ponte a Reno to effect the division there of which I gave notice to your Lordships in my last letter. They have not yet started this morning, but we are told that they will certainly do so to-morrow morning, and that they intend to retrace their steps so as to enter Tuscany by the Garfagnana, for the reasons which I have already written to your Lordships. Thus we are in the greatest uncertainty as to what we ought to do.

To-day at about noon a trumpeter came with a letter from Monseigneur de Bourbon to the most illustrious Legate, telling him how greatly he had desired peace, and the efforts he had made to obtain the assent of the troops to the truce, but that he had not been able to satisfy them; and telling him that he needed more money, but did not state the amount. He therefore begged his Lordship not to be surprised if he saw the enemy start in the morning, as he was not able to prevent it; and he suggests that it would be well to make everything known at Rome, so that the Viceroy and the Pope may satisfy the troops by new agreements, and that he will do the same. Everybody therefore, O Magnificent Signori, regards the truce as good as broken, and that nothing remains except to think of war, unless, indeed, the Almighty should come to our aid by inspiring these men to be more humble. For it seems that in the new negotiations that are being carried on, it is agreed to expend what money you have in the payment of these troops; and then, if we wish them to agree to a truce, you would need to have, besides this present payment to the troops, at least one hundred thousand florins disposable in your purse. And as this cannot be, it is folly to waste time in making a bargain which we could not carry out afterwards for want of money.

Let your Lordships therefore prepare for war, win back the Venetians, and make sure of them, so that their troops that have passed the Po will return to our assistance. And bear in mind that inasmuch as this truce, if concluded, would have been our salvation, so it may in not being concluded and keeping us in suspense prove our ruin. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 29 March, 1527.

LETTER XV.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

The enemy's troops did not start, as in my letter of yesterday I reported they intended to do. I believe the cause is the heavy rain and snow that has continued falling all night. We do not know, therefore, whether they will move to-morrow or not, but we do know that they maintain themselves here with the greatest difficulty, so that it seems almost impossible for them to remain here; and what ought to alarm them most is that they cannot better themselves by a change of encampment. If these difficulties were increased in any way by us, they would assuredly be destroyed; but our own unfortunate position prevents our doing anything of the kind. This causes the Lord Lieutenant the greatest anxiety; he organizes and applies remedies wherever he can; may it please the Almighty to enable him to do what is necessary to produce the desired effect! Nothing more is heard of the Fieramosca or of the truce; I have therefore nothing further to tell you on that subject. Every one has come to the conclusion that we have nothing to expect but war, since the perfidy of others prevented the success of a peace that would have been most useful and beneficial. There is no occasion, therefore, to delay resolving upon war; it should be done at once, so as to show to everybody that it is idle to think any more of peace. But we must act so that the Venetians and the king of France shall have no fear of our concluding any peace without their consent. And if this be done, and you succeed promptly in winning back the Venetians so that they come effectually to our assistance, then the delays which the storm has caused to the enemy will prove an advantage to us, inasmuch as it will have given us time enough for our forces to be sufficiently united to hold them in check. For your Lordships will see that it was fifteen days ago to-day that they decided to pass, but have not yet been able to do it; so that we may reasonably hope that the same causes may keep them fifteen days more, if not here where they are, at least this side of the mountains. But it behooves us, as I have said, to employ this time well, otherwise our ruin will only have been postponed, and will be the greater, the same as bodies that have been enfeebled by long disease are less able to support it than they were in its beginning. *Valete!*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 30 March, 1527.

LETTER XVI.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.:—

I have not written you for three days because so soon as the enemy moved from San Giovanni the Lord Lieutenant sent me here to provide quarters for the troops that are to arrive. Your Lordships will have learned from his letters that the enemy encamped day before yesterday at Ponte a Reno, but made no movement yesterday. The Lord President with the Marquis of Saluzzo and the Count Cajazzo, and all the rest of our troops, came here; and there remain in Bologna only the infantry of the Signor Giovanni, and those that are ordinarily stationed there. We have not yet heard to-day that the enemy has moved; and it is supposed either that they have not moved, or that they have made but little progress, so that it will take more than two days' march for them to arrive here. If we hear of his coming here, we shall leave fifteen hundred men here. The Count Cajazzo has been sent with all his infantry to Ravenna, and thus we shall go on aiding and providing, so as to prevent the enemy from taking any important place. And if he does succeed in doing this, he will certainly be ruined; or he will be obliged to accept the truce that has been made. But if our evil fortune should prevent this truce from being definitely concluded, then it will be better to avoid it by continuing the war, than to show that we desire it eagerly. For the enemy have manifested their ill feeling so openly towards Italy, and more especially towards Florence, which they regard as their prey, that until they are undeceived upon that point they will look upon any arrangement as unreasonable, unless they are moved by the authority of the Viceroy in some way that I do not understand. For it is believed that the latter, the Fieramosca, and the Marchese del Guasto act most willingly in this matter; for he has gone expressly to Rome, and the Fieramosca, according to what he writes, has done the impossible on his part. And as to the Marchese, it is reported that, having asked for a safe-conduct to go to Naples through Romagna, and not having started yet, he has renewed his request, begging that it might be granted to him with the alternative to go through Florence and Rome, as he wished to speak with the Pope and discuss these matters with him; he complains much of the wickedness of those who disturb this peace. All this is very well, and may help us to get our troops together if the war is not given up; otherwise no reasonable agreement is to be hoped for. For what sort of an arrangement can you expect from an enemy, who, despite of having the Alps between you and himself, and with the number of troops which you have on foot, still asks one hundred thousand florins of you within the space of three days, and one hundred and fifty thousand within ten days? When he gets to Florence the first thing he will ask of you will be all the movable property you possess. For without doubt (would it were not so!) the only inducement they have for advancing is the hope of pillaging your city. And there is no other way of escaping these evils but to undeceive the enemy as to your ability to resist him; and if this is to be done, then it is better to do it in the mountains than within our city walls, and to employ all the forces we have to keep him there. For if the enemy is detained in the mountains but a short time he will have to disband, as we learn from reliable quarters that if they do not succeed within the present month in taking some one of the large places, in which they will not succeed unless the places are abandoned, then they must of necessity succumb. And even if you should not succeed in defending yourselves on the other side or within the mountains, there will be nothing to prevent you from bringing the forces which you have there over to this side. For I remember in the war with Pisa, that the Pisans, wearied by its long duration, began to discuss amongst themselves whether they ought not to make terms with you. Pandolfo Petrucci, anticipating such an attempt, sent Messer Antonio da Venafro to dissuade them from it. Messer Antonio addressed them in public meeting, and after many other things said to them, "that they had passed a very tempestuous sea, and wanted now "to drown themselves in a well." I do not mention this because I think that Florence is about to abandon herself to despair, but to give you certain hope of safety provided you are willing rather to spend ten florins to secure your safety, than forty that would serve to enslave and ruin you. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quœ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

BOLOGNA, 2 April, 1527.

LETTER XVII.

Magnificent Signori, etc.: —

My previous letters will have informed you of all that has taken place here up till now. By the present you will learn that the enemy did not leave his encampment of the night before between Imola and Faenza, whence we greatly feared they would take the road to Tuscany. They sent a trumpeter to Faenza on behalf of Monseigneur de Bourbon, demanding in his name three things. The first was to grant free passage to his troops close under the walls of the place; the second, to supply him with provisions on being paid for them in cash; and the third was to receive his sick people within their town so that they might be cured there. All three of these demands were refused, and although the inhabitants were at first a little displeased at receiving our troops into garrison, yet they afterwards received them, and showed themselves more courageous and disposed to defend themselves. This morning, however, the enemy's army approached within gunshot of Faenza, and then turned off to the left, taking the lower road to Ravenna; so that we feel sure for the moment that they will not enter Tuscany. We are also almost certain for the present that they will not attempt to take any of the places in Romagna; and as we have supplied Faenza, Imola, and Furli with provisions, so we shall equally supply Ravenna, Cesena, and Rimini. And those places that cannot now be supplied by land will be supplied by sea, so that they can remain perfectly safe, unless something quite unexpected should happen.

The Count Guido, who was with his troops at Modena, and the infantry of the Signor Giovanni, which had been left at Bologna, must, at the moment of my writing, have arrived at Imola. We are here at Furli with the Swiss and the French troops; and they fight with much reluctance. The commanders of these troops, so soon as they are separated from the Lord Lieutenant, carry out the plans agreed upon either very slowly or very badly. These soldiers are insupportable, and the inhabitants of the country are so afraid of them that they receive them most unwillingly. The troops of the League move very slowly, as they have no confidence in the truce, and the reported coming of the Viceroy would have disaffected them entirely if the Lord Lieutenant had not represented to them that it amounted to nothing. We also heard that the Duke of Urbino had urgently demanded to come here, but it was believed that his zeal would cool off when he should hear that the coming of the Viceroy has revived the subject of the truce.* Nevertheless, seeing the enemy marching towards his home ought to make him more solicitous than ever.

The amount of all this is, that the advantage we have of being masters of the strong places, of having an open country, of having had money, of having plenty of troops and experience, — all these things amount to nothing in consequence of our being divided into so many parties, and having so little confidence in each other.

On the other hand, the disadvantages which the enemy suffers from being shut in by the mountains, where he is dying of hunger, and having no money, — all these are causes of their being united and acting together, and makes them obstinate beyond all human belief. But to see their obstinacy overcome by the arrival of the Viceroy would indeed be good and most happy tidings for us. *Valete!*

Furli, 8 April, 1527.

P. S. — I had forgotten to tell your Lordships that the enemy yesterday entered Berzighella, where there were neither inhabitants nor movables of any kind. The enemy burned the town; the citadel capitulated, but the enemy did not observe the terms of capitulation. *Iterum valete!*

Servitor

Niccolo Machiavelli.

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* The truce so often referred to in these letters is the one concluded between Pope Clement VII. (Medici) with the Viceroy of Naples and other ministers of the Emperor. But it was never recognized either by the Imperial army that came from Lombardy or by the Constable de Bourbon, who commanded that army. The Pope, on the other hand, relied so thoroughly upon it that he disbanded his forces, and thus found himself entirely unprepared when the Constable de Bourbon directed his march unexpectedly upon Rome.

LETTER XVIII.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

I wrote to your Lordships day before yesterday. The enemy did not stir yesterday. Bussi and Cotignola have capitulated, and the enemy must have found sufficient provisions there to feed on for a little while. They are still in a position to be able by a single day's march to lay siege to any one of the three places, Furli, Faenza, and Imola. It is now twelve o'clock and they have not stirred yet, nor do we know whether they intend doing so to-day.

We are most anxiously awaiting that truce, and it is regarded by every one here as a great necessity for us. I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quœ bene valeant.*

Servitor
Niccolo Machiavelli.

Furli, 10 April, 1527.

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LETTER XIX.

Magnificent Signori, etc. : —

Day before yesterday I reported to your Lordships all that had taken place here. Since then I have nothing special to mention except that the enemy passed the river Lamone to-day, and are taking the lower road towards La Marca. They make as little progress as usual, and it is supposed that they will not lay siege to any other place whilst they are in Romagna, for we are always before them in time to garrison the place. But it is believed that we shall not be in time to supply garrisons to any of the towns of La Marca. Indeed, it is not a good plan that does not permit us to advance with sufficient troops to be able always to supply a sufficient garrison to the places we leave behind, and yet to have troops enough to take with us in our march forward. For it is like a consuming disease to be obliged to withdraw the troops from the places we have left behind for the purpose of placing them as garrisons in those that are before us; otherwise, we should not be in time to do it, and disorders and inconveniences would arise that would be apt to prove our ruin.

According to the orders given by the Duke of Urbino, we have commenced extending the army towards Parma, and have come, thus diminishing our forces, as far as here to Furli, where not enough troops remain to us to permit our leaving any behind and advancing with the remainder to Cesena and Rimini ; for the Count Cajazzo was sent to Ravenna, and the Swiss that were left here cannot be induced to separate, one portion being unwilling to leave the other. If this could have been done, we should have left one part here, and would have gone with the other to Cesena ; but as this was impossible, we found it necessary to begin to make use of the troops which we had left in detachments along the road. For it will not do to strip a place of its garrison, unless the enemy is so far off that he cannot return to attack it before a sufficient force is sent back for its defence. We are therefore obliged to be constantly on the alert, and to do everything just at the moment, if we wish to avoid the occurrence of disorders in front or in the rear. And as we cannot always get exact information, it is impossible entirely to prevent such disorders. Thence the contradictory reports, according to which at one moment the troops were coming from Tuscany, and the next moment they were not coming. Thence came the untimely evacuation of Imola, and the apprehensions in consequence on account of Bologna. It results from this that with such a system and such embarrassments it will be impossible for us to defend La Marca ; to which is superadded the fact, that the places there are much less strong than those of Romagna. This plan of proceeding has shown and will show from day to day how much better the suggestions of Pietro Navarra were, and which he wrote to the Duke here, who, however, would not adopt them. According to Pietro Navarra's plan, all our forces were to have been united into one body. The enemy would not then have been able either to have entered Tuscany, or to have come here ; for it would have sufficed in all these places merely to have put men enough to guard the gates, as the enemy could not have attempted to besiege a place with an army in the rear that would have cut off their supplies. Anyhow there is the whole difficulty, and if we have to carry on the war, and the League does not unite its whole army, everything will go to ruin, unless, indeed, some of the necessities on which we have several times based our hopes should force the enemy to disband; but the obstinacy which the enemy manifests deprives us of all hope that this will happen. Matters have come to that point that we must either achieve or conclude a peace, which, however unfavorable it may be, we shall not be able to decline, provided the conditions are at all endurable. For if we continue the war, and all our forces are not united, and if the commanders are not satisfied, and the king of France and the Venetians do not prove themselves better allies, and the Pope does not show himself more liberal with his money, then we shall be exposed to the most evident dangers of headlong ruin.

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

FURLI, 11 April, 1527.

LETTER XX.

MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

According to what we hear up to the present hour, which is the fifteenth, the enemy have broken camp and passed the Montone; they are moving by the lower road towards Ravenna and Cesena. Yesterday they remained quiet, and there were various and contradictory reports as to their plans and intentions, all of which I write to your Lordships, not as positive, but as having heard them in the same way as we may hear of the movements of an army that does not know as yet what it is going to do. However, one aim and object they evidently have, and that is to try their fortune in Tuscany. But where, when, and how they are going to do it, they seemingly have not been able to decide themselves. Until to-day the impression prevailed that, before coming there, they wanted to secure a roost here that would serve them as a ladder to cross the mountains. This impression was confirmed by the report and general rumor, that they expected ten cannon from Ferrara wherewith to lay siege to one of the strong places. And although the majority believed that this was merely a report spread by the enemy's commanders to serve as a pretext for their delay, either for the purpose of further negotiations for the truce, or for gaining time so that their other war material might arrive; yet it was also thought that it might be true, as the report about these cannon came from so many quarters; and it was feared that, if the thing were done, this place might suffer, the greater part of the troops being Swiss, who do not like to be shut up and exposed to the risk of being starved out, as they could not be induced by any other reason to give up the place. Fears were also entertained for Faenza, on the supposition that the enemy might have obtained knowledge of the folly of its inhabitants, who had refused a large garrison, whilst the few troops they had were so badly treated by them that they are disposed at any moment to leave the place. Ravenna is feared for as being a large city, and having at present a garrison of not more than two thousand infantry; although in case of necessity more troops could readily have been sent there.

But all these doubts and fears were dispelled this morning by a new piece of intelligence, brought us by some men just arrived from the camp, and who are men of intelligence and good judgment. They report that the four pieces of cannon which the enemy had with them were sent by them to Luco; and that they had heard the Duc de Bourbon say, in discussing this matter with the other commanders, that the enemy wanted to pass into Tuscany regardless of everything else; and that he would go either by the Marecchia or some other route not far from that, which led also to Borgo a San Sepolcro. Every effort will be made to learn whether it be true that these four cannon are at Luco; for if that be so, then the whole matter would be perfectly clear. Their coming there must make us in part believe in the necessity in which they find themselves of being obliged to do something; and that it does not seem to them that they can make any progress in Romagna. We know, moreover, that the Siennese are urging them every day, and, according to a letter that has been intercepted, offer them provisions for one year if they will come that way. Our troops are all in such position that, with so many roads open to them, they can at any time get into Tuscany before the enemy; and if your Lordships have ordered that the most important places in the Val di Tevere and Val di Chiana shall be well supplied, and the others evacuated, the enemy, once entered upon your territory, will not make any greater progress there than what he has done here, mainly because he has no heavy artillery with him. So that it may be said that so long as he shall not have arrived upon the Siennese territory he will not be able to effect anything of importance; and this will last long enough for us to have the whole frontier guarded by our troops from here. It is said that men ought to make a virtue of necessity; but if to virtue supervenes necessity, then virtue ought to become powerful and invincible. Your Lordships and our city have by your virtue alone defended and saved both Lombardy and Romagna; and it is impossible that now, since necessity has supervened to virtue, you should not be able to save yourselves.

It is now two o'clock of the night, and the enemy are encamped on the river Montone, a little below Strada. The reports multiply that they are going towards Tuscany, and that they have sent their heavy artillery to Luco. The Lord Lieutenant is resolved to wait until they have made another day's march; and having thus assured himself of the route they are going to take, he will begin by sending the Count Guido, who is at this moment at Imola with a portion of our troops, in the direction of Tuscany; and we shall follow him with the rest, so as to be there before the enemy.* And as all this is an evil that has been foreseen, your Lordships must not take another fright at it, for we have never thought here that we should be able to hold them back if they really wished to come. All that we could do was that they should have greater difficulties to encounter in coming, and that if possible they should gain less credit by it. And this has been accomplished, for they have not taken a single place in this province, and have not, therefore, any place that would, so to say, serve them as a ladder to enable them to reach Florence; and thus they have not the reputation which they would have had, if they had made some honorable captures. Thus they remain for the present like those bands of adventurers which, for one hundred and fifty years, have gone roving through the country, levying tribute, or ravaging it, without ever capturing any places. There is no apprehension that our country is less capable of making resistance than the country here, or that the aid which the enemy has obtained from Sienna would prove more injurious to Tuscany than that which he has received at the hands of the Duke of Ferrara. The Duke of Urbino, as your Lordships will have heard, has sent two thousand men to his duchy; and suspicions have arisen that he has allowed some of his people to supply provisions to the Imperialists, which, if true, would facilitate their passage. We can only report what we hear from day to day; it is for your Lordships to judge whether some steps should not be taken for the protection of Florence through the Venetian ambassador.

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* The Constable Duc de Bourbon actually entered Tuscany; but whether this was a mere ruse to lull the suspicions of the too credulous Pope, or whether it was that he really believed that no advantage could be gained from it, after having been a short time on the Arezzo territory the Constable suddenly turned and rapidly marched upon Rome, where the Pope was wholly unprepared, and when the troops of the League were no longer in time to prevent this movement.

I recommend myself to your Lordships, *quæ bene valeant.*

Servitor

NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

FURLI, 13 April, 1527.

LETTER XXI.

SIGNOR LIEUTENANT: —

The Captain Messer Andrea[*] has replied to the demand which we have made upon him at your Lordship's request, that one of his galleys and a brigantine were at Livorno, and that the rest of his fleet was here; but that he could not dispose of any of his vessels owing to what was going on around us; that at any moment it might happen that the Pope had need of him, and if on such an occasion he were otherwise engaged he might be blamed for it; but that the galley and the brigantine would have to return from Livorno, and then he would place the brigantine at our disposal. He also informed us that the Marchioness of Mantua was to be here to-morrow, and would proceed with three galleys to Livorno, and that we might have passage on board of these. But we finally arranged to go either in the brigantine or galley, whichever should first return from Livorno. We had a conversation with the Captain about your letter of this morning, and he expressed himself pleased with everything, provided you would make your second encampment either at Monte Mari or in the Pope's vineyard. And above all he deemed it important that you should venture upon a battle only when you had an advantage, fearing lest with equal

[*] Andrea Doria.

forces you would be beaten.* The news from Florence and from France seemed to give him the greatest pleasure; and as to Florence he said that, if the Pope had taken a similar course a year ago, matters would now be in a very different condition.

Niccolo Machiavelli.
Francesco Bandini.

Civita Vecchia, 22 May, 1527.

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* All this has reference to the march of the army of the League to liberate the Pope from the Castel San Angelo, where he was besieged, together with the whole court, after the taking of Rome on the 6th of May, 1527, by the Constable Bourbon. The artful delays by the Duke of Urbino, commander-in-chief of the forces of the League, have been made familiar by the historians of the time. He first permitted the Imperial army to march upon Rome and make themselves masters of it, and then refused to succor the Castel San Angelo, although he had always troops enough to oppose the Imperial army, and even to beat them.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

DESCRIPTION

OF THE

MANNER IN WHICH THE DUKE VALENTINO PROCEEDED TO KILL VITELLOZZO VITELLI, OLIVEROTTO DA FERMO, AND THE SIGNOR PAGOLO AND THE DUKE GRAVINA ORSINI.*

THE Duke Valentino had returned from Lombardy, where he had gone to exculpate himself to King Louis XII. of France from the many calumnies that had been told of him on account of the revolt of Arezzo and other places in the Val di Chiana. He had stopped at Imola with the intention of uniting all his troops there for the purpose of attacking Giovanni Bentivogli, the tyrant of Bologna; as he wanted to bring that city under his dominion and make it the capital of his duchy of Romagna. When this project became known to the Vitelli and the Orsini and their adherents, they became apprehensive that the Duke would become too powerful; and that it was to be feared that after taking Bologna he would turn to destroy them, so as to remain alone under arms in Italy. They therefore appointed a meeting at Magione, in the Perugian territory, which was attended by the Cardinal, Pagolo, and the Duke Gravina Orsini, Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto da Fermo, Giampagolo Baglioni, tyrant of Perugia, and Messer Antonio da Venafro, envoy of Pandolfo Petrucci, chief of the government of Sienna. They discussed the aggrandizement of the Duke, and his intentions, and the necessity of checking his eager ambition, as otherwise there would be danger of their being destroyed with the rest of them. They resolved not to abandon the Bentivogli, and to endeavor to win the Florentines over to their side. Accordingly they sent agents to those places, promising help to the one, and urging the other to unite with them against the common enemy. This meeting became quickly known throughout Italy, and those peoples who were not satisfied to be under the rule of the Duke, amongst whom were the people of Urbino, took hope of a change for the better. Thus it came that, whilst minds were thus undecided, certain men of Urbino formed the plan to seize the castle of San Leo, which still held for the Duke, and availed themselves of the following opportunity. The governor was strengthening the castle, and, as he was getting some timbers brought in, the conspirators placed themselves in ambush; and whilst the drawbridge was encumbered by some beams that were being brought to the castle, so that the guard on the inside could not prevent them, the conspirators seized the opportunity and leaped upon the bridge, and thus obtained entrance into the castle. So soon as this capture became known, the whole country rose in rebellion, and recalled the old Duke; although the capture of the castle did not inspire the people with as much hope as the meeting at Magione, by means of which they hoped to obtain assistance.

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* This description is contained in an official letter written by Machiavelli to the Magistracy of the Ten at the very time when he was the Florentine envoy to the Duke Valentino. The slight difference between that letter and the description, is one of words only, and not of facts. The beginning of the letter is as follows: —

"MAGNIFICENT SIGNORI, ETC.: —

"As your Lordships have not received all my letters, which would in great part have informed you of the circumstances connected with the event that has taken place at Sinigaglia, I think it proper to give you by the present full particulars of the same. I have ample leisure to do so now, having intrusted to our magnificent ambassador all the business we have to attend to here at present. And I believe that it will be agreeable to you to know these details, on account of the character of the event, which is in all respects remarkable and memorable."

So soon as the members of the assembly at Magione heard of this revolt in Urbino, they felt that they must not lose this opportunity. They at once called their troops together, for the purpose of seizing any other place that might still remain in the hands of the Duke, and sent again to Florence to solicit that republic to join them in extinguishing the conflagration that threatened her equally with themselves. They showed the Florentines how easy victory would be, and that they could never expect a more favorable opportunity. But actuated by their hatred against the Vitelli and the Orsini, from various causes, the Florentines not only declined to unite with them, but sent their secretary, Niccolo Machiavelli, to offer to the Duke Valentino shelter and assistance against his new enemies. He found the Duke at Imola, full of apprehensions because his own troops had suddenly and quite unexpectedly turned against him; so that he found himself disarmed at the very moment when war was almost upon him. But having taken courage again in consequence of the offers of the Florentines, he decided to protract the war with the few troops that he had, and to endeavor by peace negotiations to obtain assistance. This he managed in two ways: he sent to the king of France for troops, and at the same time engaged every man-at-arms, and others who followed the calling of mounted soldiers, and was careful to pay them all most exactly.

Notwithstanding all this, his enemies advanced and moved upon Fossombrone, where some of his troops had made a stand, but were routed by the Vitelli and the Orsini. This induced the Duke to try and stop these hostile attempts against him by peace negotiations; and being thoroughly skilled in the art of dissembling, he lost no chance of making his enemies understand that they were making war upon a man who was willing that they should have possession of all he had acquired, and that he merely wanted the title of prince, leaving them to have the principality. And so thoroughly did he persuade them of this that they sent the Signor Pagolo to him to negotiate a peace, and meantime they put up their arms.

But the Duke did not for a moment stop his preparations, and made every effort to increase both his infantry and his mounted force; and to prevent these preparations from being noticed, he distributed his troops separately through all the places of the Romagna. Meantime some five hundred French lances had come to him, and although he felt strong enough to revenge himself upon his enemies by open war, yet he thought it would be safer and more advantageous for him to keep up his deception, and not to stop his peace negotiations. And so well did he manage this matter, that he concluded a peace with them, according to which he confirmed to each of them their old engagements; he paid them four thousand ducats at once, and promised them not to disturb the Bentivogli. He also concluded a matrimonial alliance with Giovanni, and consented that none of them should ever be constrained to appear in person before him, except so far as it might suit themselves to do so. On the other hand, they promised to restore the duchy of Urbino to him, as well as all the other places which they had taken up to that day, to serve him in all his expeditions, and not to make war upon any one without his permission, nor to engage themselves in the service of any one else.

After the conclusion of this treaty, Guido Ubaldo, Duke of Urbino, fled again to Venice, having first caused all the fortresses in his state to be dismantled; for having full confidence in the population, he did not want these fortresses, which he believed he could not defend, to fall into the enemy's hands, who might use them to restrain and oppress his friends. But the Duke Valentino, after having concluded this convention, and having distributed all his troops and the French lances throughout the Romagna, suddenly left Imola, about the end of November, and went to Cesena, where he remained many days, negotiating with the agents of the Vitelli and of the Orsini, who happened to be with their troops in the duchy of Urbino, as to what new enterprises were to be undertaken. But as nothing was concluded, Oliverotto da Fermo was sent to make him the offer, that, if he were disposed to undertake the conquest of Tuscany, they were ready to co-operate with him; but if not, then they would go and endeavor to capture Sinigaglia. To which the Duke replied, that he had no intention of carrying the war into Tuscany, as the Florentines were his friends; but that he should be well pleased that they should take Sinigaglia.

Very soon after that, news came that the place had capitulated, but that the citadel had refused to surrender to them, the governor being unwilling to give it up to any one except to the Duke in person; and therefore they urged him to come there at once. The opportunity seemed favorable to the Duke, and his going not likely to give umbrage, as he had been called by them, and did not go of his own accord. And to make things the more sure, he dismissed all the French troops, who returned to Lombardy, except the one hundred lances under the command of Monseigneur de Caudales, his brother-in-law; and having left Cesena about the middle of December, he went on to Fano. There he employed all the cunning and sagacity that he was capable of; he persuaded Vitelli and the Orsini to await him at Sinigaglia, assuring them that mistrust could not make the agreement between them more sincere nor more durable, and that, so far as he was concerned, he only wanted to be able to avail himself of the arms and advice of his friends. And although Vitellozzo remained very reluctant to accept the invitation, his brother's death having taught him that a prince whom you have once offended is not to be trusted, yet he yielded to the persuasion of Pagolo Orsino, who had been corrupted by presents and promises of the Duke to wait for him at Sinigaglia. The Duke thereupon, before leaving for Fano, on the 30th of December, communicated his plan to eight of his most trusty followers, amongst whom were Don Michele and Monseigneur d'Enna, who afterwards became Cardinal. He directed them that so soon as Vitellozzo, Pagolo Orsino, the Duke Gravina, and Oliverotto came to meet him, each two of them should take one of these four between them, mentioning specially by name each one of the four which each two of them were to take between them; they were to entertain them until their arrival at Sinigaglia, and were not to permit them to leave until they had reached the Duke's lodgings, where they were to make them prisoners. After that he ordered that all his armed force, consisting of more than two thousand horse and ten thousand infantry, should be at the break of day on the Metauro, a river five miles from Fano, and there to wait for him. Having met them there on the morning of the last day of December, he sent about two hundred of his mounted men ahead towards Sinigaglia, and then he started his infantry, after which he came himself with the remainder of his mounted force.

Fano and Sinigaglia are two cities of the Marches, situated on the shore of the Adriatic, and some fifteen miles distant from each other. Any one going to Sinigaglia has the mountains on his right hand; their base in some places stretches close down to the sea, so as to leave but a narrow space between, and at the widest place the distance between the mountains and the sea is barely two miles. The city of Sinigaglia is but little more than a bowshot's distance from the foot of the mountains, and less than a mile from the shore. By the side of the city runs a little stream, which bathes that part of the walls of the city that looks up the road towards Fano. On approaching Sinigaglia the road runs for a considerable distance by the mountains; but on arriving at the stream that bathes the walls of Sinigaglia, the road turns to the left, and follows the banks of the stream for about a bowshot's distance, until it comes to a bridge that spans the stream almost in face of the gate by which you enter Sinigaglia, not in a straight line, but obliquely. Before the gate there is a suburb composed of some houses and a square, one side of which is formed by the bank of the little stream.

The Vitelli and the Orsini, having given orders to await the coming of the Duke, had, by way of personally showing him honor, and for the purpose of lodging his troops, sent their own away to some castles about six miles distant from Sinigaglia, and had only left Oliverotto with his men in Sinigaglia; these consisted of one thousand infantry and one hundred and fifty mounted men, who were quartered in the above-mentioned suburb. Matters being thus arranged, the Duke Valentino went towards Sinigaglia; and when the head of his cavalry had reached the bridge, they did not pass it, but halted, and one half faced the river, and the other half fronted towards the country, leaving a space between them for the infantry to pass through, who entered the place without halting. Vitellozzo, Pagolo and the Duke Gravina, mounted on mules, and accompanied by a few horsemen, came to meet the Duke. Vitellozzo was without arms, and wore a cloak lined with green; he seemed very sad, as though he had a presentiment of the death that awaited him, which caused some astonishment, as his valor and former fortune were well known. It was said that, when he parted from his troops to come to Sinigaglia for the purpose of meeting the Duke, it seemed as though he bade them good by forever. He recommended his house and fortune to his captains, and admonished his nephews not to remember the fortune of their house, but only the valor of their fathers.

When the three arrived before the Duke, they saluted him courteously, and were graciously received by him; and those to whom the Duke had committed their charge took them at once between them. But when the Duke noticed that Oliverotto was not with them, (he having remained with his troops at Sinigaglia, whom he kept arrayed in line in the square opposite his lodgings by the river, where he made them go through their exercises,) he gave a wink to Don Michele, to whose charge Oliverotto had been confided, to see that Oliverotto should not escape. Don Michele therefore rode ahead, and having found Oliverotto he told him that this was not the time to keep the troops out of their quarters, which might otherwise be taken from them by the troops of the Duke; and therefore he advised him to let the troops go into their quarters, and come himself with him to meet the Duke. Oliverotto followed this advice, and went to join the Duke, who so soon as he saw him called him; and after having duly saluted the Duke, he joined the others.

When they had entered Sinigaglia they all dismounted at the Duke's lodgings, and, having entered with him into an inner chamber, they were all made prisoners. The Duke immediately mounted his horse and ordered the troops of Oliverotto and the Orsini to be disarmed and stripped. Oliverotto's troops, being near by, were completely stripped, but those of the Vitelli and the Orsini, being at a distance and having apprehended the destruction of their masters, had time to unite, and, recalling the valor and discipline of the Orsini and the Vitelli, drew together, and succeeded in saving themselves despite of the efforts of the people of the country and the hostile troops. The Duke's soldiers, not satisfied with plundering the troops of Oliverotto, began to sack Sinigaglia, and they would have completely pillaged the town, if the Duke had not repressed their rapacity by having a number of them put to death.

But when night came and the disturbances were stopped, the Duke thought it time to make way with Vitellozzo and Oliverotto; and having them both brought into the same chamber, he had them strangled. Neither of them before death said a single word worthy of their past lives. Vitellozzo conjured those who put him to death to implore the Pope to grant him a plenary indulgence for all his crimes. Oliverotto, weeping, cast all the blame for the injuries done the Duke upon Vitellozzo. Pagolo and the Duke Gravina Orsini were left alive until Duke Valentino heard that the Pope had seized the Cardinal Orsino, the Archbishop of Florence, and Messer Jacopo da Santa Croce. After having received this intelligence, the Signor Pagolo and the Duke Gravina were strangled in the same way as the others, at Castel della Pieve, on the 18th of January, 1503.

REPORT ON THE AFFAIRS OF GERMANY.

No one can doubt the power of Germany, for she abounds in population, wealth, and troops. As to riches, there is not a community that has not a considerable amount in the public treasury; it is said that Strasburg alone has several millions of florins so placed. This arises from the fact that they have no expenses for which they draw money from the treasury, except to keep up their munitions, which, when once provided, require very little to keep them up. The order established in these matters is really admirable; for they always keep in the public magazines grain, drink, and fuel enough for one year. They also keep a supply of the raw material for their industries, so that in case of siege they can feed the people, and supply those who live by the labor of their hands with the necessary materials for an entire year without any loss.

They spend nothing for soldiers, for they keep all their men armed and exercised, and on holidays these men, instead of amusing themselves with idle play, exercise themselves, some with the gun, some with the pike, and some with one or another kind of arms; for which exercises they have established prizes of honor and other rewards. These are their only expenses, for in other matters they spend very little; and thus every community is rich in public treasure.

The reason why the private citizens are rich is, that they live as if they were poor; they do not build, and spend nothing on dress or costly furniture in their houses. They are satisfied with having plenty of bread and meat, and a stove where they can take refuge from the cold; and those who have no other things are satisfied to do without them, and do not seek after them. They spend two florins in ten years for clothing to put on their backs; all live in this proportion, according to their rank, caring little for what they have not, but only for that which is strictly necessary; and their necessities are much less than ours. With such habits, it is natural that the money does not go out of the country, the people being content with what their country produces. But money is always being brought into the country by those who come to purchase the products of their industry, with which they supply almost all Italy. And the profit which they make is so much the greater, as the larger part of the money which they receive is for the labor of their hands only, and but little is for the raw material employed. And thus they enjoy their rough life and liberty, and for that reason they will not take service to go to war, unless they are exorbitantly paid; and this alone will not satisfy them, unless they are ordered by their communities. And therefore does the Emperor of Germany require much more money than any other sovereign, for the more prosperous the men are, the more unwillingly do they take service for the wars.

It may happen that the cities unite with the princes to favor the enterprises of the Emperor, or that they desire to do so by themselves, which would be quite sufficient. But neither cities nor princes would like the aggrandizement of the Emperor; for if he ever had any states of his own, or were to become powerful, he would so subdue and abase the princes, and would reduce them to that degree of obedience, that he could avail himself of them at his will, and not when it suited them; as the king of France does nowadays, and as was formerly done by King Louis XI., who by making war upon some of the princes, and killing others, reduced them to the degree of submission in which we see them now. The same would happen to the free cities of Germany, for the Emperor would want to reduce them to such a degree of obedience that he could control them at his pleasure, and obtain from them whatever he might ask, and not what might seem good to them.

The want of union between the free cities and the princes arises from the many contrary dispositions and interests that exist in that country. But reducing these to two principal divisions, it may be said that the Swiss are hostile to all Germany, and the princes to the Emperor. And yet it seems a strange thing to say that the Swiss and the free communities of Germany are inimical to each other, whilst both have one and the same object, namely to save their liberties, and to protect themselves against the princes. But their disunion arises from this, that the Swiss are not only hostile to the princes, the same as the free communities, but they are equally hostile to the gentlemen, for in their country there is no difference of rank; and all, with the exception only of those who sit as magistrates, enjoy without distinction an equal and entire liberty. This example of the Swiss alarms the gentlemen in the free communities, and their whole occupation is to keep up the disunion and enmity between them and the Swiss. These have furthermore for enemies all those men of the communities who make war their trade, owing to a natural jealousy lest these should be more esteemed than themselves. So that you cannot bring ever so few or so many together in one camp without their quarrelling or coming to blows.

As to the enmity of the princes towards the cities and the Swiss, that is so well known as to make any discussion of it unnecessary; the same with regard to the hostility between the Emperor and the princes. It is well to bear in mind that the Emperor, instigated by his hatred of the princes, and unable to lower their pretensions by himself, has sought the support of the free cities; and for the same reasons he has for some time past taken the Swiss into his service, and has to some extent gained their confidence.

Considering now all these differences, and adding those that exist between one prince and another, and one community and another, it will be seen how difficult it is to obtain in the Empire that unanimity which is so necessary for an Emperor to carry out his projects. But what makes the enterprises of Germany vigorous and easy of success is, that there is not in all Germany a prince who would dare to oppose the designs of the Emperor, as used to be the case formerly. And yet it must be borne in mind that it is quite a sufficient impediment for an Emperor not to be aided by the princes in any of his projects; for those who will not make open war upon him will nevertheless dare to refuse him their support, and those who will not dare to refuse him aid and support will yet dare not to fulfil the promises which they may have made to the Emperor, while some who will not even dare this will yet venture to be so slow in the execution of their promises, that their performance will no longer be in time to be of value. All this impedes and deranges the Emperor's plans.

The truth of this was shown when the Emperor wanted to pass into Italy the first time, contrary to the wishes of the Venetians and the French. At the Diet held at that time in Constanz, the cities of Germany promised the Emperor sixteen thousand infantry and three thousand horse; and yet they could never get enough of them together to make five thousand men. The reason of this was, that, so soon as the contingent of one community arrived, that of another went home because they had completed their term of service. Some cities, for the purpose of exemption from service, gave money, which it was not difficult to induce the Emperor to accept. And for this and other reasons the promised number of troops was never brought together, and the enterprise failed in consequence.

The power of Germany certainly resides more in the cities than in the princes; for the latter are of two kinds, temporal and spiritual. The first have been reduced to great weakness, partly through their own acts, each principality being subdivided amongst several princes, in consequence of the laws of inheritance which they observe; and partly because the Emperor has debased their power, by the aid of the cities, as stated above, so that they have become as it were useless friends. As for the ecclesiastical princes, if not reduced by hereditary divisions, yet have they been brought very low by the ambition of their communities, sustained by the favor of the Emperor; so that the Archbishop Electors, and other dignitaries of this sort, have no power or influence in their own large communities. The consequence is that the division existing between them and their cities prevents their aiding the Emperor's undertakings, even if they had the wish to do so.

But we come now to the free and imperial cities, which are the real nerve of the Empire, and have money as well as a good organization. For many reasons they enjoy their liberty with indifference, and have no desire to aggrandize their power; and what they do not desire for themselves they care little for others to have. Moreover, as there are a good many of them, and each one governs herself independently, their resolutions, when they wish to decide upon anything, are slow, and have not the desired efficiency. The following is an instance of it.

Not many years since, the Swiss assailed the states of the Emperor Maximilian and Suabia. His Majesty agreed with these communities to repel the enemy, and the free cities obligated themselves to put and keep in the field fourteen thousand men; but they never got the half of that number together, for when the troops of one community arrived, those of another went home. So that the Emperor, despairing of success, made terms with the Swiss, leaving them the city of Basle. Now if such was the conduct of these communities where their own interests were involved, think what they would do to aid the enterprises of others. All these considerations taken together diminish the power of these cities considerably, and render them of little advantage to the Emperor.

Owing to the extensive trade which the Venetians have with the merchants of the German cities, they have understood this better than any one else; but in all matters that they have had to do or to negotiate with the Emperor, they have never swerved from a strictly honorable course. For if they had feared the German power, they would have employed some other means, either in the way of money or by the cession of some place; or if they had believed that that power could have been united, they would never have opposed it; but knowing the impossibility of that, they opposed it courageously, and bided their opportunity.

If, therefore, in one of these cities the affairs that concern a great number of citizens are neglected, by how much greater reason will they be even more neglected in so great an empire. Moreover, these cities know very well that every acquisition made in Italy or elsewhere would only be for the benefit of the princes, and not for their own, inasmuch as the princes can enjoy them personally, which a community cannot do; and whenever the reward is unequal, men do not like to spend equally. Thus the power of these cities is great, but it is such that you cannot avail yourself of it. If those who fear Germany had examined the above-explained causes, and the results which this power has achieved for many years past, they would have seen to what extent it can be depended upon.

The German men-at-arms are very well mounted, and those parts that are usually protected are very well covered by armor, but their horses are heavy. And I must say that in a fight with Italians or French they would not be able to resist; not on account of the men, but they use no kind of general armor for the horses; their saddles are small and are without saddle-bows, so that the least shock unhorses the men. Another thing that renders them less effective is that the lower part of their bodies, that is to say their thighs and legs, are not protected by any armor; thus they are unable to resist the first shock, in which the value of the men-at-arms and their service consists.

For that reason they cannot use short arms, as they and their horses are so easily wounded in those parts that are not protected by armor. This puts it in the power of every foot soldier to unhorse or run them through the body with his pike; and moreover, when their horses get very much excited, their weight prevents them from being properly controlled. Their infantry is excellent, and the men are of fine stature, — very different from the Swiss, who are small, and neither clean nor good-looking. The greater part of the infantry is armed only with a pike or a short sword, so as to be more active, expeditious, and light. They are in the habit of saying that they do this because they have no other enemy but the artillery, from the effects of which neither breastplate, corselet, nor gorget can protect them. They fear no other weapons, for they say that their discipline is such that it is impossible to penetrate their ranks, or to approach them nearer than the length of a pike.

They are most excellent troops for a battle in the open field, but are not good for a siege, nor for defending a city; and generally speaking, where they cannot preserve their order and their ranks they are not to be depended upon. Experience has proved this; for whenever they have had to do with Italians, and especially when they have had to besiege a town, as was the case at Padua and other places, they gave but poor account of themselves; whilst, on the contrary, wherever they found themselves in the open field, they have always shown to advantage. So at the battle of Ravenna, between the French and the Spaniards, the French would have lost the day if they had not had the German Lansquenets. For whilst the men-at-arms of the opposing armies were engaged hand to hand, the Spaniards had already routed the French and Gascon infantry; and if the Germans, with their well-ordered ranks, had not come to their support, they would have been all killed or taken prisoners. And so it was lately when the Catholic King declared war against France, and made an attack in Guienne; the Spaniards were more afraid of a body of ten thousand German troops which the king of France had, than of all the rest of his infantry, and avoided every occasion of meeting the Germans hand to hand.

SECOND REPORT ON THE AFFAIRS OF GERMANY.

MADE 17 JUNE, 1508.

IN June last the Emperor held a Diet at Constanz of all the princes of Germany, to provide for his passage into Italy, for the purpose of being crowned. He had called this Diet of his own accord, and also because he had been urged to it by the Pope's envoy, who promised him powerful support on the part of the pontiff. The Emperor demanded of the Diet for his enterprise three thousand mounted men and sixteen thousand infantry, and pledged himself to add as many as thirty thousand men of his own. The reasons why he did not ask for more troops for so important an enterprise were, first, that he believed that that number would suffice; persuaded that he would have the support of the Venetians and other powers of Italy, as I will explain hereafter. He could never have believed that the Venetians would fail him, as he had but lately rendered them important services, when they were afraid of France, after her conquest of Genoa; for he had then sent at their request two thousand troops to Trent. He started the report that he intended to assemble all the princes; but, instead, went off into Suabia to threaten the Swiss, if they did not abandon their alliance with France. This caused King Louis to return to Lyons immediately after taking Genoa; so that the Emperor believed that he had saved the Venetians from a war which they feared, and that therefore they ought to be very grateful to him; in fact, he said several times that "he had no better friends in all Italy than the Venetians."

The other reason why the Emperor had asked for so small a number of troops from the Diet was, that they would much more readily grant him that small number, than if he had asked for more, and would more likely keep their promise. And because the Diet would more readily place them all under his command, without trying to give them commanders in the name of the Empire, who would be his companions rather than his captains. In fact, there were several members of the Diet, and the Archbishop of Mayence amongst them, who wished to push this enterprise with great vigor, and wanted to provide at least forty thousand men, and give them four commanders in the name of the Empire. Whereupon the Emperor became angry, and said, "I can carry this enterprise through "by myself, and therefore want the honors of it." The Diet thereupon voted him the nineteen thousand men, and decided moreover to give him one hundred and twenty thousand florins, to supply the army with necessaries, and to hire five thousand Swiss for six months, as he might think fit. The Emperor proposed that the men should assemble by the day of San Gallo, that seeming to him ample time to get them together, and convenient for their method of carrying on a war. He stated, moreover, that in the mean time he should be able to accomplish three things: the one, to win over the Venetians, whom he never mistrusted until the last moment, although their ambassador had been sent away, as was well known; the second, to make sure of the Swiss; and the third, to draw from the Pope and other states of Italy a goodly sum of money. He went on therefore with his negotiations; the day of San Gallo came, and the men began to collect, but the Emperor had not accomplished any one of the three things just mentioned. But as it seemed to him that he could not start, and not having as yet any doubts as to his final success, he sent some of the troops to Trent and some to other places; and did not stop his manœuvres until January came, and he had consumed one half of the time, and half of the supplies accorded to him by the Empire, without having accomplished anything. Finding himself in this position, he made the utmost efforts to win the Venetians. First he sent Fra Bianco to them, and then the priest Lucas; he sent the despot of the Morea, and at several intervals he sent his own heralds to them. But the more he went after them, the more they discovered his weakness, and the more they withdrew from him; for they found in all his promises not one of the motives that induce states to form alliances, which are either the common defence, or the fear of being attacked, or simply their advantage. But they saw clearly that they would enter into an alliance where all the expense and danger were theirs, whilst the advantage would be all the Emperor's. The Emperor, however, having no other course open to him, decided to attack them without further loss of time; thinking that perchance this might induce them to change their course. Perhaps this proceeding may have been suggested to him by his envoys; or he may have hoped that such an attack might induce the Empire to keep its engagements, and might possibly even influence them to augment his subsidies, seeing that the first did not suffice. But as he knew that before the arrival of such increased support he could not continue the war, nor abandon the country to the discretion of the enemy, he called a Diet of the people of Tyrol to meet on the 8th of January at the town of Botzen, which is about a day's march above Trent. This principality, which he had inherited from his uncle, gave him a revenue of more than three hundred thousand florins, without being obliged to lay any taxes. He could levy there over sixteen thousand troops, and the inhabitants there are nearly all wealthy. This Diet remained in session nineteen days, and finally concluded to concede to the Emperor one thousand men for his descent into Italy; and if that number did not suffice, they would give him five thousand for three months, and would even go as far as ten thousand men, if the defence of the country required it.

After this conclusion the Emperor went to Trent, and on the 6th of February he made two attacks, the one upon Roveredo, and the other upon Vicenza, having only five thousand men, or even less, for these two assaults. Thereupon he suddenly left, and with a body of only about fifteen hundred infantry and peasants threw himself into the Val di Codaura in the direction of Treviso, ravaging a valley and taking certain strongholds. But seeing that the Venetians did not budge, he left his troops without notice, and retraced his steps to ascertain the intention of the Empire. The troops which he had left in the Val di Codaura were all killed, in consequence of which he sent the Duke of Brunswick there, but nothing was afterwards heard of him. He convoked the Diet in Suabia for the third Sunday in Lent; but as he had perceived that the members were not well disposed towards him, he went off to Guelders, and sent the priest Lucas to the Venetians to try to bring about the truce, which was concluded on the 6th of the present month of June, after having lost all that he possessed in the Friuli, and being on the point of losing Trent also. But that place was defended by the people of the Tyrol; so far as the Emperor was concerned, however, and the troops of the Empire, Trent would have been lost; for these troops left for home at the most critical moment of the war, when their six months' service had expired.

I know that people hearing this, and having seen it, will wonder and lose themselves in various conjectures, and cannot imagine why nothing has been seen of those nineteen thousand men which the Empire had promised, and how it is that Germany has not more keenly felt the loss of her honor, or how the Emperor could have deceived himself so completely. And thus every one varies in his ideas as to what is to be feared or hoped for the future, and what course matters may take. But as I was on the spot, and have heard the matter often discussed by many different persons, and having no other business but to observe this, I shall report all the facts that seemed to me worth noting. And if these observations do not explain everything distinctly, all of them taken together may perhaps solve the above questions. Nor do I give them as absolutely true or reasonable, but I report them only as having heard them; it seeming to me the duty of a servant to place before his master all that he learns and that may be of interest to him, so that he may make use of it for his advantage.

All whom I have heard speak on the subject agree that, if the Emperor could have done one of two things, he would certainly have succeeded in his designs upon Italy, considering the condition in which she is at present. And these things are, either that he should have changed his nature, or that Germany should have supported him in good earnest. Examining now the first, they say that, considering his resources, and supposing that he knew how to avail himself of them, he would not be inferior to any other monarch of Christendom. His states are said to give him a revenue of six hundred thousand florins, without any taxes, and his office as Emperor gives him an additional one hundred thousand florins. This income is entirely his own, and obliges him to no expense whatsoever. He does not expend one penny for either of the three items for which other sovereigns are obliged to provide; that is, he keeps no men-at-arms, he pays no garrisons of fortresses, nor any officials of the cities. For the gentlemen of the country owe him military service, the fortresses are guarded by the inhabitants, and the cities have their burgomasters, etc., who administer their affairs.

He might nevertheless, if he were, for instance, like the king of Spain, provide in a little time such means as would insure the success of any enterprise. For with a revenue of eight to nine hundred thousand florins the Empire would not be so small a matter, nor would his country be so niggardly, but what he could easily increase his income; and thus with the convenience of declaring war suddenly, having troops prepared for war in every place, and being provided with money, he could carry the war promptly to every point, and fall unawares upon his enemies. Add to this the credit which it gives him to have the nephew of the king of Castile with him, the Duke of Burgundy, and the Count of Flanders, and his connection with England. All these things would be of such advantage, if well used, that all his designs upon Italy would without a doubt prove successful. But the Emperor, with all this income, never has a penny; and what is worse, no one knows what becomes of all his revenues.

As to the management of other matters, the priest Lucas, who is one of the Emperor's principal agents, told me this: "The Emperor asks counsel of no one, but all the world advises "him; he wants to do everything himself, but does nothing "in his own way. And notwithstanding that he never communicates to any one, of his own accord, the secret designs "which he has formed, yet, as their execution makes them "known, he is dissuaded from them by the persons he has "about him, who draw him off from his original plans. And "those two qualities which many persons praise in him, the "liberality and facility of his character, are the very qualities "that ruin him." This is the very reason why his intended descent into Italy caused such alarm. For his necessities increase with his victories, and it is not reasonable to suppose that he would have immediately changed his ways; and unless he should do so, if all the leaves on all the trees in Italy had become ducats, they would not suffice him. There is nothing that with money in hand he would not have obtained; and therefore were those considered wise by many who hesitated to give him money the first time, so as not to have to hesitate still more about giving it to him a second time. And if he could not by any other means have obtained money from any prince, he would have asked it by way of loan; and if he could not have borrowed it, all the expenditures made until then would have been thrown away. I will give you a strictly true instance of this. When Messer Pagolo,* on the 29th of March, made his demand, Messer Francesco Vettori having been despatched by him, I went to see him with the draft of the treaty, prepared according to your request; and when he came to that part which says, "Non possit Imperator petere aliam summam pecuniarum," etc., he wanted to have the word "jure" inserted before "petere." And when I asked him why, he replied that the Emperor wanted it so as to enable him to ask the money of us by way of loan; whereupon I answered him in such manner as was satisfactory to him. It must be observed that the Emperor's frequent needs of money are the consequences of his frequent irregularities, and these necessities give rise to his frequent demands and the frequent Diets. And the little estimation in which he is held causes his feeble resolutions and their still more feeble execution.

But if the Emperor had come into Italy, you would not have been able to pay him with Diets, as Germany does; and his liberality would have been so much the worse for him, as he requires more money for carrying on a war than any other sovereign; for his people, being free and rich, are not influenced either by necessity or by affection, but serve him only by express orders of their communities, and at their own price; so that if, at the end of thirty days, the money for their pay has not come, they leave at once, and neither prayers nor promises nor threats will prevail upon them to stay, if the money is wanting. And when I say that the Germans are rich, the truth of it is easily proved. They become rich in great part because they live as if they were poor; for they neither build, nor dress, nor furnish their houses expensively. It is enough for them to have plenty of bread and meat, and to have a stove behind which they take refuge from the cold. Those who have no more conveniences do without them, and do not seek after them; they spend about two florins in ten years on their back, and every one lives according to his rank in that proportion. Nobody cares for what he has not, but only for that which is necessary to him, and their necessities are very much less than ours. The result of these habits is that no money leaves their country, as the people are content with what their country produces; and thus they enjoy their rough and free life, and will not enlist to go to war, unless they are overpaid. And even that would not suffice, if the communities do not command their going; for these reasons the Emperor requires much more money than the king of Spain, or any other sovereign, whose people have different habits.

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* This is Paolo de Lichtenstein, confidential agent of the Emperor Maximilian, mentioned by F. Vettori in his despatches to the Signoria of Florence. See Letter X. of the Mission to the Emperor, *ante*, page 132.

The Emperor's good and easy nature is the cause why all persons whom he has about him deceive him. One of the men attached to his person has told me that he can be deceived once by everybody and everything, until he has found them out. But there are so many men and so many things, that he is exposed every day to being deceived, even if he were constantly on his guard. He has endless good qualities, and if he could overcome his two qualities of weakness and easy nature, he would be a most perfect man; for he is a good commander, governs his country with great justice, is affable and gracious in his audiences, and has many other qualities of a most excellent prince; and to conclude, if he could modify the two above-mentioned defects, it is judged that he would succeed in everything he undertakes.

The power of Germany cannot be doubted by any one, for she has abundant population, wealth, and armies. As to her wealth, there is not a community that has not a considerable amount in the public treasury; it is generally said that Strasburg has several millions of florins so placed. This arises from the fact that they have no expenses from which they draw money from the treasury, except to keep up their munitions, which, when once provided, require very little to keep them up. The order established in these matters is really admirable; for they always keep in their public magazines grain, drink, and fuel enough for one year. They also keep a supply of the raw material for their industries, so that, in case of siege, they can feed the people and supply those who live by the labor of their hands for an entire year without loss. They spend nothing for soldiers, for they keep all their men armed and exercised.

For salaries and other matters they spend very little, so that every community has its public treasury well filled.

It remains now that these communities unite with the princes to favor the designs of the Emperor, or that they should do so themselves without the princes, which would suffice. Those who occupy themselves with these matters say that the cause of their dissensions is to be found in the many different dispositions that exist in that country. And as to a general want of unity, they say that the Swiss are regarded as enemies by all Germany, the free cities are so regarded by the princes, and in the same way the princes by the Emperor. It may seem strange to say that the Swiss and the free cities are hostile to each other, as they both have one and the same object; namely, that of preserving their liberties and protecting themselves against the princes. But their division arises from this, that the Swiss are not only hostile to the princes, the same as the free cities, but they are also inimical to the gentlemen in the cities, because in their country there are neither princes nor nobles, and everybody enjoys perfect liberty, without any distinction amongst men, excepting only those who are members of the magistracies. This example of the Swiss alarms the nobles who still exist in the free cities, and all their efforts are directed to keeping alive this disunion and hostility. The Swiss have for enemies also all those men of the cities who devote themselves to military pursuits, being instigated by a natural jealousy, for they imagine themselves less esteemed; so that it is impossible to bring together few or many of the two countries in the same camp without their quarrelling and coming to blows.

As to the enmity of the princes towards the communities and the Swiss, it is unnecessary to say anything, as it is a notorious fact; the same as the hostility between the Emperor and the said princes. And you must know that, as the Emperor's greatest repugnance is towards the princes, not being able by himself to humble them, he has availed himself of the support of the communities; and for the same reasons he has for some time past had negotiations with the Swiss, whose confidence he has of late gained to some degree. So that, taking into consideration all these divisions, and adding thereto those which exist between one prince and another, and one community and another, it seems almost impossible to bring about that union which is so essentially necessary for the Emperor. But what has kept everybody hopeful, and made the affairs of the Emperor for some time past so promising, and his enterprises likely to succeed, is the fact that there is not a prince in all Germany who could venture to oppose the Emperor's designs, as has already been said above. This has been and still is the truth; and people deceive themselves in supposing that it is only war and sedition in Germany that can defeat the Emperor's projects, for he can be thwarted as effectually merely by not supporting him. And those who would not dare to declare war against him would not hesitate to refuse him their assistance, whilst those who would not venture to refuse him their support will not fulfil the promises they have made him; and those who would not even risk doing this will yet manage to delay their compliance with their promises until their execution would no longer be of use to the Emperor. All this offends the Emperor and deranges his plans.

The truth of this may be seen in the fact that the Diet had promised him nineteen thousand men, as stated above, but we have never seen as many as five thousand together. This could only have arisen either from the above-explained causes, or because the Emperor accepted money instead of men, and was possibly satisfied to take five instead of ten.

And to explain still further as to the power and union of Germany, I would say that this power resides more in the communities than in the princes; for the princes are of two kinds, namely, temporal and spiritual. The temporal princes are reduced to a condition of great weakness, partly by their own action, each principality being divided between several princes, according to the custom of succession which they observe, and which requires such equal division; and partly because the Emperor, aided by the communities, has diminished their power, so that they have become useless as friends and little to be feared as enemies. As for the ecclesiastical princes, if their power has not been annihilated by hereditary divisions, the ambition of the communities favored by the Emperor has reduced their authority very low; so that the Archbishop Electors, and other similar dignitaries, can effect nothing in their own large communities. The consequence is, that neither themselves nor their cities, being thus divided amongst themselves, can do anything to aid the Emperor's enterprises, even if they wished to do so.

But we come now to the free and imperial cities, which are the very nerve of the country, and who possess riches and well-regulated organization. These are for many reasons very lukewarm in their disposition to aid the Emperor's projects; their chief aim is the preservation of their liberty, and not increase of their dominions; and what they do not desire for themselves, they care not that others should acquire. Moreover, there being so many of them, and all accustomed to govern themselves, causes their support to come very slow, even if they are willing to grant it; so that their usefulness is no longer in time. The following is an instance of this. Nine years ago the Swiss assailed the states of Maximilian and of Suabia. The Emperor agreed with the free cities to repel the enemy, and the cities promised to keep fourteen thousand men under arms, at his disposal; but they never had half of that number together, for when the contingent of one city came, the others went away; so that the Emperor, despairing of the enterprise, made terms with the Swiss, and abandoned to them the town of Basle. Now if they act in this way where their own interests are concerned, it is easy to judge as to what they are likely to do to aid the enterprises of others. All these circumstances taken together, therefore, reduce their power very much, and make it of little advantage to the Emperor.

The Venetians, owing to their extensive commercial relations with the merchants of the German cities, have understood this better than any one in Italy, and have therefore more effectually opposed the power of the Empire. But if they had feared that power, they would not have ventured to oppose it; and even if they had opposed it, and had believed that it had been possible for the whole Empire to unite against them, they would never have attacked it.

But as they were satisfied of the impossibility of such union, they did not hesitate to show themselves so bold as has been seen. Nevertheless, all the Italians that are at the Emperor's court, and whom I have heard discuss all these questions, remain firmly attached to the hope that all Germany is on the point of uniting, and that the Emperor will throw himself into her arms; and that the plans that were discussed last year at the Diet of Constanz as regards the generals and the troops will be carried out; and that the Emperor will now yield from necessity, and the Diet will do so voluntarily, so as to recover the honor of the empire; and that they will care little about the truce, which had been concluded by the Emperor and not by them. To this others reply, that it is well not to put too much faith in things that are yet to happen, because it is seen every day that those matters which interest a great many in a city are often neglected, and that such will be the case to a much greater degree in a whole country. Moreover, the cities know that the conquest of Italy would not be for their benefit, but for that of the princes, who can personally enjoy that country, which they could not do. And where the benefit is unequal, people are not willing to bear equal expenses; and thus opinions remain undecided, without being able to determine the events that are yet in the future.

This all that I have learned respecting Germany. As to other matters that may influence peace or war between the different princes of that country, I have heard a good deal said, but as it was all based upon mere conjectures, of which you may have more correct information and certainly better judgment, I leave them without saying anything more about them. *Valete!*

DISCOURSE ON THE AFFAIRS OF GERMANY AND ON THE EMPEROR.

Having written on my return here last year all I knew about the affairs of Germany and the Emperor, I am really at a loss as to what more to say on the subject. I shall confine myself therefore to a few remarks about the character of the Emperor. There is not, and perhaps never has been, a prince more wasteful than he is. This is the reason why he is always in want, and why he never has money enough, no matter in what situation he may find himself. He is very fickle, wanting one thing to-day, and next day caring nothing about it; he takes counsel from no one, and yet believes everybody. He desires what he cannot have, and leaves that which he can readily obtain; and therefore he always takes contradictory resolutions.

On the other hand he is most warlike, and knows how to maintain and conduct an army well, preserving justice and discipline. He bears any kind of fatigue as well as any other man inured to it; is courageous in danger, and as a general is not inferior to any man of the present day. He is affable in his audiences, but will grant them only when it suits him; he does not like ambassadors to come and pay their court to him, unless he sends for them; he is extremely reticent; he lives in a constant state of agitation of mind and body, and often undoes in the evening what he has concluded in the morning. This makes the missions near him very difficult, for the most important duty of an ambassador, whether sent by a prince or a republic, is to conjecture well the future, both as to negotiations and events; for he who is able to form wise conjectures, and make them well understood by his government, renders an important service, and enables his government to take timely measures. The envoy who does this does honor to himself, and benefits the government at home; and the contrary is the case when the conjectures are badly made. To illustrate this more particularly, assume that you are in a place where the question is between making war or negotiating. To perform your duty well, you have to say what the prevailing opinion is respecting the one and the other. War has to be measured by the number and quality of the troops, by the amount of money, by conduct, and by fortune; and it is to be presumed that that party which has most of these advantages is likely to be victorious. After having well considered thus who is likely to be successful, it is necessary to make it well understood here, so that the republic and yourselves may the better decide upon the course to be adopted. The negotiations are of different kinds, that is, they will be partly between the Venetians and the Emperor, partly between the Emperor and France, partly between the Emperor and the Pope, and partly between the Emperor and yourselves. Respecting the last it ought to be easy to conjecture rightly, and to judge of the Emperor's intentions with regard to yourselves, — what he really wants, which way his mind is turned, and what could make him draw back or go forward; and having found that out, to judge whether it be more advantageous to temporize or to conclude. But it will be for you to decide as to how far your commission extends in relation to these matters.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE AFFAIRS OF FRANCE.

DRAWN UP BY NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI.

THE Crown and the King of France are at this time more flourishing, rich, and powerful than they have ever been; and for the following reasons.

First, the Crown, being hereditary in the same family, has become rich; for as it happens sometimes that the king has no sons nor heirs to his properties, his states and substance have fallen to the Crown. As this has been the case with several kings, the Crown has been greatly enriched by the many states that have thus come to her. Such was the case with the duchy of Anjou, and such will happen to the present king, Louis XII., who, having no male heirs, will leave to the Crown the duchy of Orleans and the state of Milan; so that at this time all the best fiefs of France belong to the Crown, and not to private barons.

Another and most important cause of the power of this king is, that formerly France was kept disunited by the powerful barons, who dared on every occasion to take up arms against the king; as was the case with the Dukes of Guienne and of Bourbon, but who are now most submissive; and thus the Crown has become more powerful. A further reason is, that every neighboring prince did not hesitate to attack the kingdom of France; for there was always either the Duke of Brittany, or a Duke of Guienne, or of Burgundy, or of Flanders, ready to aid him, and to grant him passage through his territory and give him asylum in case of defeat. This happened whenever the English were at war with France, for they always caused the king embarrassments through the Duke of Brittany; as did the Duke of Burgundy by means of the Duke of Bourbon. But now that Brittany, Guienne, and the Bourbonese, as well as the greater part of Burgundy, are the most submissive provinces of France, the neighboring princes have no longer the same facilities for invading the kingdom of France; on the contrary, these provinces would now prove hostile to such an invader. And the king, having acquired these provinces, has himself become more powerful thereby, whilst the enemy has become weaker.

There is still the further reason that nowadays the richest and most powerful barons of France are of royal blood and lineage, so that, if the superior branch were to lack heirs, the Crown may descend to them. And therefore each maintains his good relations to the Crown, hoping that either himself or his descendants may some day attain that high rank.

To rebel, therefore, or to be mixed up in any way with such opposition, might be of greater injury than advantage to him. This came near happening to the present king, when made prisoner in the war of Brittany, in which he took part with that Duke against the French. And at the death of King Charles VIII. the question came up whether, by his defection from the Crown, he did not forfeit his rights to the succession. But the riches which he had accumulated by his economics enabled him to secure partisans; and the most immediate successor to the throne, if he had been out of the way, namely, the Duke of Angoulême, was but a child; and thus the present king received the crown, for the reasons stated, and from the general favor which he enjoyed.

The final reason is, that the properties of the barons of France are not divided amongst the heirs, as is the case in Germany and in the greater part of Italy; but they go entirely to the oldest sons, who are the real heirs. The other brothers submit patiently, but, aided by the older brother, they nearly all take to the profession of arms, and strive in that career to achieve a rank and wealth that will enable them also to purchase a state, and in this hope they live. And thence it comes that the French men-at-arms are nowadays the best, for they are all nobles or sons of lords, and count upon achieving the same rank as their fathers.

The infantry that is raised in France cannot be good for much, for it is a long time since they have had a war, and therefore they have no experience whatever. They are moreover all of the lower order and tradesmen from the country, and are so subordinated to the nobles and so abject in all their actions as to have become actually debased; and for that reason the king does not employ them in war, for they have given but poor proof of courage. There are however some Gascons amongst them whom the king employs, as being somewhat better than the others. This may be because they are from near the Spanish borders and bear some slight resemblance to the inhabitants of that country, although they have acted for some years past more like robbers than like real soldiers. Still, in the attack and defence of places they have not proved themselves bad, but in the open field they are good for nothing; differing in that respect very much from the Germans and the Swiss, who have no equals in the open field, but are not worth much in the attack or defence of a city. I believe this arises from the fact that in the two latter cases they cannot preserve the discipline and order which they keep in their camps; and therefore the king of France always employs Swiss or Lansquenets, for his men-at-arms have no confidence in the Gascons when opposed to an enemy. If the French infantry equalled in goodness their men-at-arms, then there can be no doubt but what they would defend themselves successfully against all other princes.

The French are by nature more ferocious than vigorous and adroit; and if you can resist the fury of their first onset, you will find them so depressed and so entirely discouraged, that they become cowardly like women. They do not support fatigue nor discomforts, and soon become neglectful of everything, so that it is easy to surprise them in disorder, and to overcome them. We have had repeated experience of this in the kingdom of Naples; and lately again on the Garigliano, where their forces were nearly double that of the Spaniards, so that it was supposed they could at any moment swallow them up. But so soon as winter began to make itself felt and the great rains commenced, they began to go off one by one into the neighboring places, to find more comfort. And thus their camp remained without sufficient force and in disorder, so that the Spaniards proved victorious, contrary to all expectation.

The same thing would have happened to the Venetians, who would not have lost the battle of Vaila if they had been content to observe the French for about ten days; but the impetuosity of Bartolommeo d' Alviano encountered a still greater impetuosity. The Spaniards experienced the same thing at Ravenna; for if they had not attacked the French, these would have been disorganized from lack of discipline and want of provisions, which the Venetians interrupted in the direction of Ferrara, and which could have been cut off by the Spaniards on the side of Bologna. But as the first acted without good advice, so the other acted with even less judgment, and the French remained victorious, although at the cost of much blood. And though the struggle was great, it would have been greater still if the main strength of the two armies had been of the same character. But the strength of the French army consisted mainly in men-at-arms, whilst that of the Spaniards was chiefly in infantry; and for that reason the slaughter was not greater. Whoever, therefore, wishes to defeat the French must beware of their first onset; whilst keeping them at bay for a time will defeat them, for the above-stated reasons. And therefore Cæsar said that "at the beginning the French were more than "men, but in the end less than women."

By the extent of her territory and the advantages derived from her large rivers, France is very productive and opulent; but the abundant productions of the soil, as well as manual labor, have little or no value, owing to the scarcity of money amongst the people, who can scarcely get enough together to pay their dues to the lord proprietor, although the amounts are but very small. This arises from their not having an outlet for the productions of the soil, for every man gathers enough to sell some; so that if in any one place a man wanted to sell a bushel of grain, he would not find a purchaser, everybody having grain to sell. And of the money which the gentlemen draw from their tenants, they spend nothing except for their clothing; for they have cattle enough to give them meat, innumerable fowls, lakes full of fish, and parks with an abundance of every variety of game; and thus almost every gentleman lives upon his estates. In this way all the money accumulates in the hands of the proprietors, and their wealth is accordingly great; whilst the people, when they have a florin, deem themselves rich.

The prelates of France draw two fifths of their revenues and wealth from the kingdom, there being a good many bishoprics having incomes from temporal as well as spiritual sources.

And as they have abundant supplies of all the necessaries of life, all the revenues and moneys that come into their hands never leave them again, according to the avaricious nature of prelates and churchmen; and all the money that is collected by the chapters and colleges of the Church is spent for silver, jewels, and costly church ornaments. Thus the Church properties and what the prelates possess privately in the way of money and silver plate, etc., amount to an immense treasure.

In the council for the direction and management of the affairs of the crown and the state of France, the prelates always constitute the majority; the other lords care nothing about this, for they know that the execution of the decisions always devolves upon them; and thus both are satisfied, the first with the direction, and the others with the execution; although at times old and experienced officers are called into the council, when military matters have to be discussed and decided, so that they may guide the prelates, who have no practical experience in these matters.

In virtue of a certain pragmatic sanction * obtained long ago from the Popes, all the Church benefices of France are bestowed by their colleges; so that, in case of the death of a bishop or an archbishop, the canons of the Church meet and confer the benefice upon the individual amongst themselves who seems to them to merit it most. It happens not unfrequently that this gives rise to dissensions amongst them, for there are always some who are favored on account of their riches, and others for their virtues and good works. The monks proceed in the same way in the election of their superiors. The other small Church benefices are bestowed by the bishops who have such livings in their gift. And if the king ever attempts to disparage this pragmatic sanction by appointing a bishop of his own choice, he would have to employ force to put him in possession, which the canons would refuse him; and if they had to yield to this force, they would abide the death of the king to expel that bishop from his see, and give it to the one elected by themselves.

The Frenchman is naturally covetous of other people's goods,

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* This pragmatic sanction was anterior to the concordat between Francis I. and Leo X. It was issued by Charles VII. in 1438, and was the foundation of the liberties of the Gallican Church.

of which, together with his own, he is afterwards prodigal. Thus, the Frenchman will rob most skilfully, to eat, or to waste what he has robbed, or even to enjoy it together with the very person whom he has robbed; entirely different from the Spaniard, who will never let you see again what he has taken from you.

France fears the English, because she remembers the incursions and devastations by the latter in the realm; so that the very name of English is a terror to the people, who do not bear in mind that France is nowadays in a very different position from what she was in those unhappy times. For she is armed, experienced in war, and united, and has possession of those very provinces which served the English as a basis for their operations, such as the duchies of Brittany and of Burgundy. Moreover, the English are no longer disciplined, for it is a long while since they have had a war, so that none of the people now living have ever seen an enemy's face; and then there is no one save the Archduke who would be willing to see them on the Continent.

The French would be much afraid of the Spaniards on account of their sagacity and vigilance. But every time that the king of Spain would attack France, he would have to do it at great disadvantage; for from that point in his kingdom from which his troops would have to start to the foot of the Pyrenees which stretch into France, the distance is so great and the country so sterile that if the French make a stand at the entrance of the Pyrenees by way of Perpignan or Guienne, the enemy's army would be disorganized, if not from want of reinforcements, at least from the difficulty of obtaining provisions, which would have to be brought from a great distance. For the country which has to be traversed is uninhabited on account of its sterility, and those who do inhabit it have scarcely enough to sustain their own existence. For these reasons, the French do not fear the Spaniards in the direction of the Pyrenees.

Nothing is to be apprehended by the French of the Flemish, whose country is so cold that they cannot raise sufficient provisions, and particularly grain and wine, which they have to procure from Burgundy, Picardy, and some other provinces of France. Moreover, the people of Flanders live by the labor of their hands, and they readily sell the produce of their manufactures, as well as other merchandise, at the French fairs; chiefly at Lyons and Paris. They have no outlet for their wares by sea, nor in Germany, for the Germans produce and manufacture themselves even more than the Flemish. Thus, when their trade with France is interrupted, they have no other market for their merchandise, and thus their goods remain on their hands, and they are not able to purchase provisions; and therefore the Flemish never have war with France, unless they are forced to it.

The Swiss are much feared by the French, owing to their close proximity, and the facility with which they can make sudden and unexpected attacks, against which, owing to their rapidity, it is impossible to provide in time. These incursions of the Swiss, however, are mere predatory raids; for as they have neither artillery nor horses, and as the strong places which the French possess near the frontier are well supplied with munitions, the Swiss are not able to make much progress. And then the nature of the Swiss is better suited to battles in the open field than to sieges or to the defence of places. But the French of the frontier do not like to come to an open hand-to-hand fight with the Swiss, for they have no good infantry that can withstand the Swiss, and the men-at-arms without infantry do not amount to much. The country, moreover, is so formed that lances and other mounted men can but illy manœuvre there, whilst the Swiss go most unwillingly far from their frontiers to reach level ground; for they would leave behind them strong places well supplied with everything, as stated above. They would also be afraid to expose themselves thus to be short of provisions, and to be unable to return to their homes, after having penetrated into the open country.

There is nothing to be feared from the side towards Italy; for the Apennine Mountains and the fortresses at their base would arrest any one who wished to attack the kingdom of France. And the country behind them is so unproductive that they would starve; or they would have to leave these strongholds behind them, which would be great folly; or they would have to go to work and take these fortresses. However, France has nothing to fear from the side of Italy, for the reasons above stated, and because there is not in all Italy a prince capable of assaulting France, and Italy herself is not united, as she was in the time of the Romans.

On the south side, France is sufficiently protected by the Mediterranean, in the ports of which there are always vessels enough, belonging to the king of France or other proprietors, to be able to defend that part of the kingdom from any unexpected attack. Against a premeditated attack there is always time to prepare, for whoever contemplates it needs time to make the necessary preparations and arrangements, and this will quickly become known to everybody. And all these provinces are generally provided with a garrison of men-at-arms, for the greater security.

Little is spent in guarding the country, for the people are most obedient, so that fortresses are not needed for the preservation of quiet within the realm; and on the frontiers, where there would otherwise be some occasion for such expenditure, the garrisons of men-at-arms make such expense unnecessary. For against a great invasion there is always time to prepare, as the invader himself would need time to gather his forces for such an attempt.

The French people are submissive and most obedient, and hold their king in great veneration. They live at a very small expense, owing to the great abundance of the products of the soil; and every one has a small property to himself. They dress coarsely, in cheap cloth, and neither the men nor the women use silk in any way, for it would at once be noted by the gentlemen.

According to the last computation there are thirty-six bishoprics in France, and eighteen archbishoprics. Of parishes there are one million * seven hundred, including seven hundred and forty abbeys. Of the priories there is no account.

I have not been able to ascertain the ordinary or extraordinary revenues of the Crown; I have asked a great many persons, and they have all replied that the revenue depended entirely on the will of the king. Some one, however, has told me that a portion of the ordinary revenue, that is to say, that part which is specially called "the king's money," and which is derived from the gabel on bread, wine, meat, etc., yields about 1,700,000 scudi. The extraordinary revenue is derived from taxes, and these are fixed high or low according to the king's will. And if these revenues are insufficient, then loans are resorted to, which are, however, rarely repaid. The royal let-

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* This must be an error, and probably meant one hundred thousand.

ters by which these loans are called for, are drawn up in the following form: "The king, our master, recommends himself "to you, and, having need of money, he begs you will lend him "the sum specified in this letter." The amount is then paid into the hands of the receiver of the place, there being one in every place, who receives all revenues, whether resulting from the gabels, taxes, or loans. The domains of the Crown have no other regulations for the payment of dues except the will of the king, as said above.

The authority of the barons over their vassals is complete. Their revenues consist of bread, wine, and meat, the same as those stated above, and so much for every hearth per year; this, however, does not exceed six or eight sous per hearth for every three months. The barons cannot raise taxes nor loans without the king's consent, which he rarely grants.

The Crown exacts from the barons nothing but the impost upon salt, and never taxes them except on the occasion of some extraordinary necessity.

The regulations established by the king with regard to extraordinary expenses, for war as well as for other purposes, are that he commands the treasurers to pay the soldiers, and accordingly they pay the amount into the hands of those who review the troops. The pensioners and the gentlemen go to the Generals of Finance, and make them give them a discharge; that is, an order for their payment from month to month; and every three months they go to the receiver of the province where they reside, and are promptly paid.

The gentlemen of the king number two hundred; their pay is twenty scudi per month, and they are paid *ut supra*, and each hundred have a chief; these used to be Messire Guyon d'Amboise, the Seigneur de Ravel, and the Vidame Louis de Brézé.

The number of pensioners is not known; some of them are paid little, others much, just as it may please the king. They live in the hope of advancement, but there is nothing fixed as regards this.

The duty of the Generals of Finance is to levy so much per hearth, and so much for taxes with the consent of the King; and to see that the expenses, ordinary as well as extraordinary, are paid at the proper time, that is, the discharges, as explained above.

The treasurers keep the money, and pay it out according to the orders and discharges of the Generals of Finance.

The power of the Grand Chancellor is absolute; he can grant pardons, and can condemn at his pleasure "etiam in capitalibus sine consensu regis." He can relieve litigants from the charge of contumacy; but he can grant pardons only with the consent of the king, for all pardons are granted by royal letters sealed with the great royal seal, and he is charged with the keeping of this great seal. His salary is ten thousand francs per year, and an allowance of eleven thousand francs for his table. By table is understood giving dinner and supper to as many members of the council as follow the Grand Chancellor, that is, to the advocates and gentlemen that are attached to him, whenever it pleases them to eat with him, which privilege they use very often.

The pension which the king of France paid to the king of England was fifty thousand francs per year; its object was the repayment of certain outlays made by the father of the present king of England in the duchy of Brittany. But this pension is now terminated, and is paid no more.

At present there is in France but one Grand Seneschal; but when there are several seneschals, — I do not mean grand, as there is only one, — then their jurisdiction extends over the ordinary and extraordinary men-at-arms, who are obliged to obey this Grand Seneschal because of the dignity of his office.

The number of governors of provinces depends upon the will of the king, who pays them what he pleases; they are named by him for life or for a year, according to his pleasure. The other governors, and even lieutenants of the small places, are all appointed by the king; and in fact all the offices of the realm are bestowed or sold by the king, and by no one else.

Every year a general statement of expenses is prepared, sometimes in August, sometimes in October or in January, according to the pleasure of the king. The Generals of Finance present an account of the ordinary revenues and expenses of the year, and then a balance is established between the receipts and the expenses, and the amount of the pensions and the number of the pensioners are increased or diminished according to the king's orders.

The amount of distributions amongst the gentlemen and pensioners is unlimited; they do not require the approval of the Chamber of Accounts; the king's authority is all-sufficient.

The functions of the Chamber of Accounts consist in revising the accounts of all who have anything to do with the administration of the moneys of the Crown, such as the Generals of Finance, the treasurers, and the receivers.

The University of Paris is paid from the revenues of the endowments of the colleges, but very poorly.

There are five Parliaments, namely, Paris, Rouen, Toulouse, Bordeaux, and the Dauphiné, and there is no appeal from any of them.

The best Universities are the following four: Paris, Orleans, Bourges, and Poitiers; after these come Tours and Angiers, but these are not worth much.

Garrisons are placed wherever the king wills it, and as many men as seems good to him, both of artillery and of infantry. Nevertheless, all the places have a few pieces of artillery in store. And within the last two years they have established them in a great many places in the kingdom, at the cost of the places where such depots have been formed, by increasing the taxes one penny per head of cattle or per measure of grain. Ordinarily, when the kingdom is at peace, there are only four places that are garrisoned; these are Guienne, Picardy, Burgundy, and Provence. These garrisons change places, and are increased in numbers according to the apprehensions of danger in either one or the other province.

I have made great efforts to find out what amount of money is assigned to the king for the expenses of his household and for his person, and find that he has all he asks for.

The archers are four hundred in number, and they are charged with the guard of the king's person. Amongst them are one hundred Scotchmen; each man receives three hundred francs per year, and a doublet of the king's livery. The king's body-guard is composed of twenty-four men, who never leave his side; they have each four hundred francs per year; their captains are Monseigneur d'Aubigny, Crussol, and the Captain Gabriel.

The foot guard is composed of Germans, one hundred of which are paid twelve francs per month; they used to be three hundred, with ten francs per month pay; and two suits of clothing, one for winter and one for summer, that is to say, a doublet and hose of the king's livery. The one hundred foot-guards used to have the doublet of silk in the time of King Charles VIII.

The fourriers are charged with providing lodgings for the court; they are thirty-two in number, and receive three hundred francs per year and a doublet of the king's livery. In providing the lodgings they divide themselves into four sections, and each section has a quartermaster, who receives six hundred francs per year. The first section, commanded by a quartermaster, or in his absence by a lieutenant, remains in the place which the court leaves, so as to settle with the proprietors who have furnished the quarters; the second division accompanies the king; the third section proceeds to the place where the king is to arrive on the first day; and the fourth goes to where the king is to arrive on the following day. They proceed with such remarkable order that every one on his arrival finds his lodgings fully prepared, even to a woman of pleasure.

The Provost of the Palace is an officer that always follows the king's person, and his office is one of absolute authority, and wherever the court goes, his tribunal is the first, and even the inhabitants of the place may be condemned by him, the same as by the king's lieutenant. Those who are seized by him for any criminal cause cannot appeal to the Parliaments. His pay is ordinarily six thousand francs per year. He has two civil justices under him, who are paid by the king six hundred francs per year each. He has also a lieutenant for criminal cases, who commands thirty archers, and these are paid the same as the archers mentioned above. He decides in civil and in criminal matters, and when the complainant has been confronted with the accused in the presence of the provost, it suffices for him to decide the case.

The king has eight house stewards; but they are not all paid equally, for some have one thousand francs per year, and others less, according to the king's pleasure. The Grand Master of the household, who has succeeded Monseigneur de Chaumont, is the Marquis de Palisse, whose father formerly held the same charge. His pay is eleven thousand francs per year; and his authority does not extend beyond commanding the other house stewards.

The Admiral of France has command of all the naval forces and all the harbors of the kingdom; he can dispose according to his pleasure of all the vessels of the fleet. The present Admiral is Monseigneur Pregent de Bedoux, and his salary is ten thousand francs per year.

The order of knighthood has no fixed number; the knights are as many as the king may choose to name. On their admission to the order they swear to defend the Crown and never to bear arms against it. They cannot be deprived of their title during their lifetime. Their pay is at most four thousand francs per year, and some have less, for they have not all the same grade.

The office of the chamberlains is to entertain the king, to precede him to his chamber, and to assist in advising him; in truth, they enjoy the greatest consideration throughout the country. They receive large pensions, — six, eight, ten, and eleven thousand francs per year; but some receive nothing, for the king often confers this title upon persons whom he wishes to honor for their services, and even upon foreigners. They have, however, the privilege of being exempt from paying any gabels in any part of the kingdom, and whilst at court they dine at the chamberlains' table, which is the first after that of the king.

The Grand Equerry always remains near the king; his duty is to supervise the other twelve equerries of the king, the same as the Grand Master of the household, the Grand Seneschal, and the Grand Chamberlain over their subordinates. He has charge of the king's horses, and aids him in mounting and dismounting. He has charge also of the king's equipages, and carries the king's sword before him.

The councillors of state have a pension of from six to eight thousand francs, as may please the king. They are now the Bishop of Paris, the Bishop of Beauvais, the Bailli of Amiens Monseigneur de Bussy, and the Grand Chancellor. But in reality Robertet and the Bishop of Paris govern everything.

Since the death of the Cardinal d'Amboise of Rouen, no one keeps open table. And as the Grand Chancellor has not been replaced, the Bishop of Paris performs the duties of that office.

The reason why the king of France claims the duchy of Milan is that his grandfather had married a daughter of the Duke of Milan who died without male heirs. The Duke Giovanni Galeazzo had two daughters, and I know not how many sons. One of the daughters was Madonna Valentina, who married the Duke Louis of Orleans, grandfather of the present King Louis XII., descendant of the race of Pepin. When the Duke Giovanni Galeazzo died, he was succeeded by his son Duke Filippo, who died without any legitimate children, leaving only an illegitimate daughter. Thereupon, according to report, the state of Milan was illegally usurped by the Sforzas; for it was said that that state should have gone to the successor and heir of Madonna Valentina. And in fact the day when the Duke of Orleans allied himself with the house of Milan, he joined to his arms of three fleur-de-lis a snake, which may be seen to this day.

Every parish in France keeps one man, who is well paid, and is called the Franc-archer, and who is obliged to keep a good horse, and be fully provided with arms and armor, whenever the king requires him to follow him to the scene of war outside of the kingdom, or for any other cause. These Franc-archers are obliged to go into whatever province in the realm is attacked or threatened. According to the number of parishes, there must be 1,700,000 of these Franc-archers.*

The fourriers and quartermasters are obliged by their office to furnish every one that follows the court with lodgings; those who are attached to the court are ordinarily lodged with the well-to-do people of the place. And to prevent any occasion for complaint, either by the owner of the house or the lodger, a tariff of prices has been established, which serves for all alike, and which fixes the price of a chamber at one sou per day; the chamber must be supplied with a bed and a couch, and these must be changed once a week. Besides this, every man pays two farthings per day for the linen; that is to say, table-cloth, towels, napkins, and for vinegar and other condiments. The linen must be changed at least twice per week; but as the people have plenty of linen, they change it more or less frequently, as may be asked by the lodger. The chambers must also be kept clean, and the beds properly made.

The price for stabling each horse is also two sous per day, and the lodger is not bound to pay anything more, except that he must have the manure removed every day. There are a good many who pay less, either because of the good nature of the proprietor, or the good disposition of the lodger; but the above is the regular tariff for the court.

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* This is undoubtedly an error, the same as in one of the preceding pages when speaking of the number of parishes; it means probably 100,000, instead of 1,000,000.

The reasons for the recent pretensions of the English upon France are the following. Charles VI. married his legitimate daughter Catharine to the legitimate son of the king of England, Henry VI. No mention was made in the contract of Charles VII., who afterwards became king of France. Besides the dowry of Catharine, Charles VI. stipulated that his son-in-law, Henry VI., husband of Catharine, should become heir to the crown of France; and that in case the said Henry VI. should die before his father-in-law, Charles VI., but leave legitimate or natural male children, then these said children of Henry VI. should be the heirs and successors of Charles VI. These dispositions, however, were declared null and contrary to the fundamental law of the kingdom, because of the passing over of Charles VII. by his father. The English, on the other hand, claim that Charles VII. was the fruit of adultery.

In England there are two archbishoprics, 22 bishoprics, and 52,000 parishes.

OF THE NATURE OF THE FRENCH.

THEY think so much of the present advantage or disadvantage, that they remember but slightly past injuries or benefits, and take little heed of the future, good or evil.

They are cavillers rather than prudent; and care little what is said or written of them. They are more eager for money than for blood, and are liberal only in fine speeches.

If a gentleman disobeys the king in a matter concerning a third person, there is nothing for him to do but to obey anyhow, if it still be in time; and if it is not in time, then he will have to stay away from the court for four months. This has cost us Pisa twice; once when Entraghes held the citadel, and the second time when the French laid siege to the town.

Whoever wishes to carry a point at court must have plenty of money, great activity, and good fortune.

If they are asked to do a favor, their first thought is, not whether they can render the favor, but what advantage they can derive from it for themselves.

The first agreements you make with them are always the best.

If they cannot be useful to you, they make you fine promises; but if they can serve you, they do it with difficulty or never.

In adversity they are abject, and in prosperity they are insolent.

They weave their bad warp well and forcibly.

He who wins victory is for the time most in favor with the king; but he who loses is rarely so. And therefore any one who is about to engage in any undertaking should consider first whether he is likely to succeed or not, and whether it is likely to please the king or not. This point, being well known to the Duke Valentino, enabled him to march with his army upon Florence.

In many instances they are not very particular about their honor, being in this respect very different from the Italian gentlemen; and therefore they attached but little importance to their having sent to Sienna to claim Montepulciano without any attention being paid to their demand.

They are fickle and light-minded, and have faith only in success. They are enemies of the language of the Romans, and of their fame.

Of the Italians none have a good time at court except those who have nothing more to lose, and nothing to hope for.

CONFIDENTIAL INSTRUCTIONS

BY NICCOLO MACHIAVELLI

TO RAFFAELLO GIROLAMI, ON HIS DEPARTURE, 23 OCTOBER, 1522, AS AMBASSADOR TO THE EMPEROR CHARLES V., IN SPAIN.

Honorable Raffaello, — Embassies are amongst those functions in a republic that confer most honor upon a citizen; and any one incapable of filling such an office cannot be regarded as competent to take part in the government of the state. You are about to go as ambassador to Spain, a country not known to you, and materially differing in manners and customs from those of Italy; and it is moreover the first time that you are charged with such a commission. Thus, if you give good proof of yourself, as everybody hopes and believes, you will derive great honor from it, which will be the greater in proportion to the difficulties which you have to encounter. And as I have some experience in affairs of this kind, I will tell you what I know about them, not from presumption, but simply out of the love I bear to you.

Every honest man knows how to acquit himself faithfully of a mission that has been confided to him; the difficulty is to do it adequately. Now he executes it adequately who knows well the character of the sovereign to whom he is accredited, and that of those who govern him, and who knows best how to adapt himself to whatever may open and facilitate the way for a favorable reception. For difficult as every enterprise is, yet gaining the ear of the sovereign renders it easy. Above all things an ambassador must endeavor to acquire great consideration, which is obtained by acting on every occasion like a good and just man; to have the reputation of being generous and sincere, and to avoid that of being mean and dissembling, and not to be regarded as a man who believes one thing and says another.

This sincerity and this frankness are of great importance; for I know some men who, from being cunning and dissembling, have so entirely lost the confidence of the prince, that they have never more been able to negotiate with him. And yet if it be sometimes necessary to conceal facts with words, then it should be done in such manner that it shall not appear; or should it be observed, then a defence should be promptly ready. Alessandro Nasi was greatly esteemed in France from having the reputation of being sincere; whilst some others, from being regarded as the contrary, were held in great contempt. I believe that you will the more easily observe this line of conduct, as it seems to me that your very nature commands it.

An ambassador will also derive great honor from the information which he communicates to his government; and this embraces three kinds, relating either to matters in course of negotiation, or to matters that are concluded and done, or respecting matters yet to be done; and to conjecture rightly the issue which they are likely to have. Two of these are difficult, but one is most easy. For to know things after they are done is generally speaking most easy, unless it should happen to be that an alliance is being formed between two princes to the detriment of a third party, and that it should be important to keep it secret until the time for divulging it shall have come; as happened with regard to the league between France, the Pope, the Emperor, and Spain, concluded at Cambray, against the Venetians, which resulted in the destruction of the Venetian republic.

It is very difficult to penetrate the secret of such conclusions, and it is therefore necessary to depend upon one's judgment and conjectures. But to find out all the intrigues, and to conjecture the issue correctly, that is indeed difficult, for you have nothing to depend upon except surmises aided by your own judgment. But as the courts are generally filled with busybodies, who are always on the watch to find out what is going on around them, it is very desirable to be on friendly terms with them all, so as to be able to learn something from each one of them. Their good will is readily won by entertaining them with banquets and gaming. I have seen very grave gentlemen who allow gambling in their houses, for the sole purpose of having that class of men coming to see them, so as to be able to converse with them; for what one does not know another does know, and very often it happens that amongst them all the whole affair is known. But he who wants another to tell him all he knows must in return tell the other some things that he knows, for the best means of obtaining information from others is to communicate some information to them. And therefore if a republic desires that her ambassador shall be honored, they cannot do a better thing than to keep him amply supplied with information; for the men who know that they can draw information from him will hasten to tell him all they know. I suggest to you, therefore, that you remind the Eight, the Archbishop, and the Secretaries to keep you fully advised of all that occurs in Italy, even the smallest item; and if anything of interest happens at Bologna, Sienna, or Perugia, let them inform you of it, and above all let them keep you advised of the affairs of the Pope, of Rome, of Lombardy, and of the kingdom of Naples. And although all these matters have nothing to do with your business, yet it is necessary and useful for you to know them, for the reasons which I have given you above. It is in this way that you have to find out the intrigues that are carried on around you; and as amongst the things you will thus learn some are true and some false, although probable, you must weigh them carefully with your judgment, and take cognizance of those that seem to you the nearest the truth, and not notice the others.

When you thoroughly understand and have examined these matters, you will be able to appreciate their aim and object, and communicate your judgment to your government. But to prevent such judgment on your part from seeming presumptuous, it is well in your despatches, after discussing the intrigues that are being carried on and the men who are engaged in them, to employ phrases something like this: "Considering "now all I have written, the shrewd men here judge that it "will produce such or such an effect."

This plan carefully followed has, in my day, done great honor to many ambassadors, whilst the contrary course has brought shame and blame upon them. I have known others, again, who for the purpose of filling their despatches with more information make a daily record of all they hear, and in the course of eight or ten days prepare a despatch from all these notes, taking from the mass of news they have thus gathered that which seems to them most interesting and likely to be true.

I have also known wise men, who had experience in embassies, adopt the plan of placing before the eyes of their government, at least once in every two months, a complete report of the state and condition of the republic or kingdom to which they are accredited as ambassadors. Such information, when exact, does great honor to him who sends it, and is of greatest advantage to those who receive it; for it is much easier to come to a decision when fully informed upon these points, than when ignorant of them. And to enable you more precisely to understand this part of your duty, I will more fully explain it.

You arrive in Spain, you present and explain your commission and office; and then write home at once and give notice of your arrival at your post, and state what you have communicated to the Emperor, and what reply he has made; leaving it for another letter to give a particular account of the affairs of the kingdom, of the character of the sovereign, and of all that a few days' stay in the country may have enabled you to report. After that, you must note with the utmost care and industry all that concerns the Emperor and the kingdom of Spain, and you will make a full report upon it. And to come to details, I would say that you must closely observe the character of the man: whether he governs himself, or allows himself to be governed; whether he is avaricious or liberal; whether he loves war or peace; whether he has a passion for glory or for anything else; whether he is beloved by his people; whether he prefers to reside in Spain or in Flanders; what kind of men he has about him as counsellors; whether their thoughts are turned to new enterprises, or whether they are disposed to enjoy their present good fortune, and what authority they have with him; whether he changes them often, or keeps them long; whether the king of France has any friends amongst them, and whether they are likely to be corrupted. And then it will also be well to think of the lords and barons who are most around him; find out what power they have, and how far they are satisfied with him; and in case of their being malcontent, how they could injure him; and whether it be possible for France to corrupt any of them. You must also find out about his brother, how he treats him, whether he is beloved by him, and whether he is content, and whether he could cause trouble within the kingdom, or in his other states. You must also learn the character of the people, and whether the league that took up arms is altogether quieted, or whether there is any apprehension of their rising up again, and whether France could rekindle that fire.

You must endeavor to penetrate the Emperor's projects: what his views are as to Italian affairs; whether he aspires to the possession of Lombardy, or whether he intends to leave that state for the Sforzas to enjoy; and whether he desires to come to Rome, and when; what his intentions are with regard to the Church; what confidence he has in the Pope, and whether he is satisfied with him; and, in the event of his coming into Italy, what good or what ill the Florentines may have to hope or fear.

All these points carefully considered and skilfully reported to the government will do you great honor. And not only is it necessary to write it once, but it is well every two or three months to refresh the remembrance of them, adding thereto an account of any new events that may have taken place; but with such skill that it may seem prompted by wisdom and necessity, and not by presumption.

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THE END.

University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge.

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